An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 8

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From Surah ar-Ra'ad (13) to Surah al-Isra' (Bani Isra'il) (17)
The light of Islam has enlightened and continuing to enlighten every corner in the world and seekers of truth have closely associated to the Holy Quran which carries the Word of Allah (SWT) to humanity. With increasing focus and attention to the Holy Quran, efforts has been done to provide a pure, correct and accurate translation of this divine book. But sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman, to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity. Hence, the need for proper explanation becomes obvious and necessary. The book titled, "An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an" compiled by a group of Muslim scholars, under the direction of Ayatullah Allamah Al-Hajj Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani is a valuable effort which presents a thorough commentary on the Quran in 20 volumes made available to the reader.

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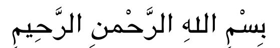
Translator(s):

Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli [5]

Topic Tags:

Qur'anic Exegesis (Tafsir) [6]

Introduction



In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

"Verily the Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right** (**or stable**) (**to run societies**)**, and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a

magnificent reward" [1].

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad tidings to Muslims" [2].

"When those come to thee who believe* in *Our Signs, say: 'Peace be on you: Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule on Mercy; verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), Lo! He is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful" [3].

The light of Islam is illuminating hearts of individuals in nearly all parts of the world, in spite of heavy barriers and careful controls and religious interrogation exerted by not only many governments of non-Muslim nations, but also in some Muslim countries, against their believing people, especially during the years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The effective influence of the light of the truth together with the speed in the movement of the Age has brought forth a more vital exchange of thought and religious ideology in connection with the Holy Qur'an.

In regard to this, we refer to what the Messenger of Allah (S) has said about it:

When afflictions surround you like the dark night refer to the Qur'an, because, it is an Intercessor whose intercession is accepted. It reports the evils (of people) which will be confirmed. It leads the person to Heaven who puts it in front of himself (follows it); and he who puts it behind himself (neglects it) will be driven to Hell.

This very Qur'an is the best guide to the best ways. It is a Book in *which there are useful explanations, statements and gaining (of goals). It is the Separator (of right and wrong).* [4]

Obviously, those people whose language is not Arabic can refer to the Holy Book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As far as we know, there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'an available in Iran alone, and probably others exist in libraries (and homes) throughout the world.

This makes it easy for the lovers of truth to obtain the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic ideology, through the medium of English, which formerly was acquired directly by the Arabic and Persian languages.

But, a fact should be mentioned here that not all of the words of Allah are easily understood by ordinary people and need explanatory commentary, i.e. 'Tafsir'.

Alongside this path, there are some problems that those eager to learn the Qur'anic truth should know and be careful of. Hence, we deal here with some of the difficulties we were involved in and recognized when we were preparing this endeavour; the fruit of our humble labour of more than three years, a translation of the commentary of over one section (of the 30 sections) of the Holy Qur'an from different

commentary sources.

The work is based upon popular commentaries accepted by Muslim scholars. We consulted other books and present living scholars, learned in the Qur'anic Sciences for our work to produce this commentary in a simple standard of English easily understood by the laymen.

The style of writing here is a mixture of British–English and American–English, understandable for all the readers; even for those acquainted with only one of them. However, excuse us for using interchangeable spellings. If both are used, from time to time, they are acceptable; for example, honour and honor.

Not All English Versions of Quran Are Acceptable

Some Western translators of the Holy Qur'an; not all of them, and some producers of literature on Islam in the English language, are the anti–Muslim elements which are busy in distorting the facts about the faith to create disruption in Islamic ideology.

These hostile minds have attempted to black–list the Holy Prophet (S) and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful and subtle mis–translations, mis–interpretations, mis–representations and distortion of the facts.

The distortion and the misinterpretations are so skilfully decorated in linguistic excellence and delusive logic that the blind lovers of the English language, who are hardly or even totally unaware of the actual Qur'anic factors of their own faith, get caught up in the falsehood tempered with eloquence and they swallow the 'sugar–coated poisonous pills of deceit' allowing themselves to become duly conditioned to serve the purpose of the publications of the hostile camps.

The current standing of Evil has always been against the Truth in the history of man, even before written history, when the sons of Adam came into existence.

When these antagonistic elements have successfully extended their active influence upon our own religion, ideology and social tradition, we are also duty bound to Allah, His Final Word (the Holy Qur'an), the Faith, and to Islam, to do our best to present to every sincere seeker of Truth, a selection of a translation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an of the original Arabic text, and the 'Tafsir' (commentary) of them.

By the way, we believe that it is the essential belief of 'Shi'a' that the present Qur'an, that which is in our hands today, is the Holy Book of Allah, revealed to the holy Prophet Muhammad (S), as arranged and compiled during his lifetime and read out to him and it contains nothing less or more than what was revealed.

And it should be noted that,

"Nay, but it is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in a tablet preserved." [5],

whose present arrangement is the order in which the various verses were sorted and arranged at the command of the Holy Prophet (S), himself.

This is the uncorrupted or undisturbed Word of *Allah,* the preservation of which has been guaranteed by *Allah,* Himself:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)"6.

Furthermore, the English translations, along with the Arabic text of the verses, in this book, are selected from different translations of English versions of the Holy Qur'an, (whose names are listed at the end of the book under the title of '**References**') which are from the best available sources in which some better styles and more proper meanings are employed. The translator and editor did their best to preserve this divine message and in conveying the Qur'anic facts in English.

In a few instances this writer, the translator, changed a word of those existing translations to a better one, from the existing material which was employed in this work.

What is a 'Commentary'?

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'an is necessary, but sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity:

"...read you, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you.."7.

This reading has to be done not only with the tongue, voice and eyes; a mere recitation, but, also, with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience give us.

However, it is not always possible to fully understand the Holy Book as *Allah* says:

"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable,"Which none shall touch but those who are purified"8.

Thus, some additional information is needed. For example, it is sometimes necessary, for understanding the text, to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse; or to know the philological changes of a word used at the time of revelation or before it and the meaning that it has in Arabic, today.

Or the alphabetical symbols which evidently and undoubtedly are secrets, and especially the ambiguous /mutashabihat/; the knowledge of which has been announced to be with the /rasixuna fil 'ilm/; those deeply established in knowledge.

They are some things that only 'the particular ones, the sinless ones', besides the Prophet (S), himself, viz, Ahlul-Bait, knew with all the Qur'anic facts and talked about them in their traditions and narrations (as He says:

"And whom We had taught knowledge from Our own Presence"[9].

For instance, the Apostle, himself, answered the questions which used to be asked by people as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more enlightenment. These answers and explanations or in other words, the commentaries were gathered by some Companions /ashab/ and were afterward written down which are called 'Hadith' or 'traditions'.

Of course, the holy Prophet (S) had openly declared in Hadith-uth- Thaqalayn that the Qur'an is with the Ahlul-Bait, and to avoid going astray, the Muslims should be attached to these two. Later, the Ahlul-Bait's explanations and narrations, were added to them and together with the effect of expert religious scholars, in the past and present, established 'Exegesis' (explanation of Qur'an) which became a science in itself and was called 'Tafsir', commentary.

'Commentary' shows how every verse, or group of verses, were revealed to the holy Prophet (S) on a particular occasion, but which also has a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time.

This is also one of the miracles of the Qur'an that with the help of 'commentary' it is always open and it is always new for those new generations to come.

The Current Commentary

As was mentioned earlier, the light of Islam is enlightening every corner in the world and seekers of truth, having referred to the translations of the Holy Qur'an, find that they need 'Tafsir', (commentary).

Some of them, Shi'a believers in particular have been led to this Center; Imam Ali (a) Library, requesting a clear, concise English Tafsir; 'a commentary of the Holy Qur'an'.

From the beginning of Islam until today (although many times the Holy Qur'an has been translated into English and a few of them are published with brief, detailed commentary, as footnotes, there has rarely been, as far as we know, a fairly complete commentary in English sufficient for them to find their answers. So the decision was made to supply this commentary.

Ayatullah Mujahed Al-Hajj, Allamah Sayyid Kamal Faqhih Imani, the founder and responsible party of this Islamic Scientific Research Center, approached us and reported the situation to scholars and appropriate research societies.

Then 12 people, who had varying nationalities and educational backgrounds, especially from the point of the English language and Islamic Theology, gathered. In their first gathering, which was held on 28th Safar, 1412 (1370 H. / 1991), they concluded that the commentary of the whole Qur'an which they intended to supply in English, would take many years to produce.

In order to quench the thirst of the lovers of Truth who had demanded it again and again, they decided to supply the commentary of the last section of the Qur'an, as a sample, and after its publication and receiving constructive comments by the readers and with a better skillfulness of the ones involved, the translation of the commentary would begin from the beginning of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, they thought it would be better that the sample, entitled **'An Enlightening Commentary Into the Light of the Holy Qur'an',** begin with Surah Insan, the end of the 29th Section, because the Qur'an was revealed for the improvement of Man and this Surah is about Man and his creation from a lowly life–germ which can develop unto the highest point where no other creature can ascend.

But, after several weeks the number of us dwindled to a handful and after some months, until the present, we remain two people; the translator and the editor. During this period of more than three years, a few people have tried their hands at this task to have a share in the translation, but, for different reasons, they were not successful.

However, we are completely grateful for their efforts and extend our thanks for their attempts, as well as to those who had any involvement in this work.

Attributes Needed for Working on This Kind of Commentary

This endeavour needed not only the knowledge and skillfulness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, and Islamic science and culture, because Tafsir is an attempt to analyze and explain the meaning of verses in the Holy Qur'an.

Moreover, Allah, Himself, says:

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims"[10].

Then, it needs that those involved know a little bit about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with the commentary. Also, the phonetic sound systems of the two languages, English and Arabic, are different. Therefore, when an Arabic word from the Qur'an is mentioned in the English text, it is shown with the phonetic alphabet and in its special phonetical sign, i.e.: / /, to avoid using 'Arabic script' in the book, as far as possible.

A transliteration table of the Arabic letters and sounds and the corresponding phonetic signs, applied in this book, is given at the beginning of the book.

The Problems in Translating

We tried to avoid mixing up our own personal theories and conclusions with the interpretation of the text itself. With the help of Allah, we did our best; at times asking for guidance from some learned religious men (Ruhaniyan), and used all the knowledge and experience we possessed in the service of the Holy Qur'an for its commentary, hoping that *Allah* accepts it.

The nature of this sort of endeavour is so that, in the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes.

For instance, cultures in the Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words like /amrun bayn al amrayn/ in the case of fatalism and freewill are nearly impossible to translate into English, because of the difference in the concept in English literature; or the meaning of a word like 'prostration', in English, is rather different with what /sajdah/ exactly means in Arabic.

In such cases, we selected the meaning of the words from among what the earlier commentators and phililogists used and where they were not unanimous, we also used the ideas of new writers, who had reasonable advantages in their interpretations, when the senses adopted with the commentary sources that we were taking and translating materials from. Explanations, of course are always helpful which we took benefit from, too.

It is noteworthy that there are some circumstances in the text, of the commentary, in which a verse or verses of Qur'an from other Suras rather than the Surah under discussion are mentioned as evidence or, thereby, for strengthening the idea.

The text of these verses and also the traditions and narrations from the holy Prophet or Ahlul-Bait (a) is printed in bolder type than the running commentary in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. Also, the mentioned verses are generally taken from A. Yusuf Ali's translation.

It Was Only By His Merciful Will!

Translators Note

Both the editor and the translator have interesting factual stories to tell of how the way of this endeavour was paved by Providence and how they were divinely led to be absorbed into this task, Alhamdulillah. A few words given here in this regard are not to be misunderstood as a display of vanity for any peculiar distinction; for there is none.

It is purely to attract the attention of the readers to a living instance of the Providential implementation of the divine plan and how man drifts to his assignment and how matters are automatically manipulated, though, they seem yet only to be circumstantial.

"He said: Our Lord is He Who gave to each (***created***) ***thing its form and nature and further gave*** (***it***) ***guidance"***[11].

For example, once, on a night, the writer of these lines, the translator, had seen in a dream that the Holy Qur'an, was placed, honourably, on a high position, wide open, high above a very great crowd of people amongst whom he was standing, watching. The full name of his was clearly written in the midst of the writings on the right page of it with magnificent bold letters.

The dream was obviously a good one, but it did not mean vividly to him at that time.

It was four years before he found out, in the course of translating the commentary of verses 11-16 from Surah 'Abasa No. 80, both the meaning of that dream and the cause of later changes in his career of twenty years, as a manager of a profitable Foreign Language Center, thanks to Allah.

It is always true what the Qur'an says:

"You will not unless Allah wills, surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise"[12].

By His graceful arrangement this writer was separated from his almost material gains, of this fleeting world, to be set toward the assured, perfect, pure, spiritual rewards of the next, everlasting world from Him, Allah willing, when he began translating the commentary of the Qur'an and entered this great Divine Ocean of light, he found out that from earlier times such a success had been appointed and bestowed to him by Allah.

Therefore, all changes and graceful arrangements directly are from Him and it was His helpful Will that planned His graceful design and showered the ability and insight upon us to lead us to the present point. We are eagerly in hopes that He will help us and guide us in all cases to complete the task successfully so that He accepts it from us.

Editor's Note

In my case, it is a fact that only by the grace of Allah have I come to be at the helm working, side-by-side with the translator, on this commentary of the Holy Qur'an. Editing and checking this translation of **'An Enlightening commentary into the Light of the Holy Quran'** has been a most important and rewarding experience for me.

To be of value in this work several things were necessary; my mother tongue, English, was almost at the top of the list. Then, having the ability to use a computer and printer, which involved me having to learn and use a Farsi program named Zarnegar, produced in Tehran, Iran, I was able to make use of the wonderful array of fonts it contains; necessary to type the Arabic and English languages.

Next, living in Iran, for four years, has made it possible for me to become acquainted with the native

language and customs. However, the greatest asset, of all, is that I am a Shi'a Muslim woman.

It is fifteen (15) years from now, that in America, I became enlightened to the existence of the Holy Qur'an and accepted it as a better way of life. Over this period of time it has put me in touch with the purity of the religion and the logical answers to the religious questions I had as a Catholic.

My father told us (during our childhood) that if we ever wanted to know anything we should go to the source and to always have the correct tools on hand to do the job right.

When I started hearing and seeing, on television, the upheaval of the Islamic Revolution, in Iran, and the speech of a brave and courageous man they called Ayatullah Khomeini, I became very intense on knowing why it was happening and in knowing who this man was who had been exiled and was making his return to his homeland.

"Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, 'Believe ye in the Lord,, and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous"[13].

It was something more spectacular than I had ever read about in my high school history books. There was a charge in it that I could not explain, and up until that time, I had never really heard anything about Islam, Prophet Muhammad or Muslims, for that matter.

I bought ***A. Yussuf Ali's English Translation of the Holy Qur'an,*** basing my decision on my father's counsel and I began from page one.

It was talking about the same things I had already learned; Adam and Eve in the Garden, disobeyed God due to the wiles of Satan and then, were expelled to Earth; Moses is given the scripture and leads his people out of Egypt, but they forfeited their covenant for a golden calf; Abraham, Ismail and Issac of the religion true, and there, Mary.

Hail Mary! Chaste, pure, chosen above other women, given glad tidings of a Word from Him; his name will be Christ Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor... [14]

And it went on: Practise charity, take care of the orphans, speak a speech that is just, beware of the deceits of the Unbelievers...I was in awe as I neared the end. No place was any obscenity found –no trace of ugliness which I found in the Bible –nothing but pure scripture; a complete religion, the one and only continuing from the first of Abraham. So, it became crystal clear to me that Islam is the final, refined message from God.

True, just, undeniable, containing what I had always felt and that is this: There is only One God; unique, needing no partner, powerful, and yet merciful and kind. How could God be more than one; Creator of such a vast universe and more?

With this understanding, though, came many tests to my new-found-faith; albeit necessary tests. Did I really believe - did I really submit to His Will - was I really worthy?

I began by only putting on a scarf, covering all of my hair.

"And say to the believing women...that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers..."[15]

Immediately the responses that I encountered proved the rightness of it all. I was chided, spit at, hit and cursed. Well, of course, a great deal of this was due to the propaganda which caused mass hysteria against Iran and not having their facts straight about the religion of Islam, however, it hurt just the same, but I had learned forgiveness and perseverance from my mother.

It was difficult for my family in the beginning; this change I was making, however, we are very close at heart, today, due to my faith and reliance on Allah.

"And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.'"[16]

Almost at once the veils over my understanding fell away and I started rejecting a lot of the 'big-business' propaganda that had infiltrated into my life.

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error; whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God bath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks..."[17]

The 'Big Sell' eats away at the very fabric of human society to the point that life has only a superficial meaning and high value is put on every inanimate object which man can produce.

"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for God bestows His abundance on whom He will "[18].

I had developed an intense desire to go to Iran--the country of martyrs; having an air so thick with emotions, direction and goal, at that time, and having the presence of an undeniable strength caressing it in the hands of an unseen power.

Ten years after I started practicing the tenets of Islam the opportunity presented itself for me to be able to fulfil my desire.

"Not equal are those Believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause...God has granted a grade higher to those who strive..."[19]

I wished very much to become involved in some type of work regarding the Holy Qur'an and in due time I was approached to work with a group of people on a commentary of the Holy Qur'an.

"***And for those who fear God, He prepares a way out" "And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine...***"[20]

Those of you who know anything about the rigors of editing know that it is very time-consuming and attention to detail is very necessary.

Spending many hours discussing the meaning of a single word, or phrase, can cause the ordinary soul to become frustrated, but that frustration is ultimately quelled when peace and tranquillity cover the heart at the point where there is that final agreement and gives those involved renewed enthusiasm to continue.

Sometimes you will notice more spacing than usual on a line or within the phonetic brackets (/ /), but this is due to the fact that the Zarnegar program is a Farsi program and it took much time trying to place the little phonetic line over, or the little dot under, the correct letter, because English is written from left to right and Farsi is written from right to left, so, I had a bit of anarchy on my hands for a time.

I leave you, now, in the hopes that you, too, will be provoked to question and seek. (Seek and you will find). Looking back, I feel that Allah does consider me worthy.

"God is the protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them into light"[21].

Wa Salam.

1. 17:9
2. 16:89
3. 6:54
4. Usul al-Kafi, vol 2, p. 599.
5. 85:21, 22
6. 15:9
7. 73:20
8. 56:77, 79
9. 18:65
10. 16:89
11. 20:50
12. 76:30
13. 3:193
14. 3:42-45
15. 24:31
16. 17:24
17. 2:256
18. 2:212
19. 4:95
20. 65:2-3
21. 2:257

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By the way, it should be notified that for the translation of this volume, Tafsir Nemunah has been mainly utilized.

* * * *

يَأَيهَا النّاس قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَنٌ مّن رّبّكُمْ وَ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُوراً مّبِيناً

"O mankind! Verily there has come to you a convincing proof (***the Messenger and the Qur'an***) ***from your Lord: for We have sent unto you a light*** (***that is***) ***manifest."***[1]

إِنّا نحْنُ نَزّلْنَا الذّكْرَ وَ إِنّا لَهُ لحَفِظونَ

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message and We will assuredly Guard it (***from corruption***)***."***[2]

وَ مَنْ أَعْرَض عَن ذِكرِى فَإِنّ لَهُ مَعِيشةً ضنكاً وَ نحْشرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

"But whosoever turns away from My Message (***the Qur'an***)***, verily for him is a straitened toilsome life, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement".***[3]

وَ نُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And We send down* (*stage by stage*) *of the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy for those who believe ...” 4

1. 4:174
2. 15:9
3. 20:124
4. 17:82

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A Presentation to Muslims

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ أَطِيعُواْ اللّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficient, The Merciful

"O ye who believed! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you". 1

(***'Those charged with authority'***

are only the twelve sinless Imams (a) and; at the time of occultation, Sources of Imitation, who are learned, pious, and just, should be referred to.)

في إكمال الدين في حديث عن جابر الجعفي عن جابر بن عبد الله الانصاري قال: قلت: يا رسول الله عرفنا الله ورسوله، فمن اولي الامر الذين قرن الله طاعتهم بطاعتك؟ فقال (ص) هم خلفائي يا جابر، وأئمة المسلمين بعدي أولهم علي بن أبي طالب، ثم الحسن والحسين، ثم علي بن الحسين، ثم محمد بن علي المعروف في التوراة بالباقر وستدركه يا جابر فإذا لقيته فاقرأه مني السلام. ثم الصادق جعفر بن محمد، ثم موسى بن جعفر، ثم علي بن موسى، ثم محمد بن علي، ثم علي بن محمد، ثم الحسن بن علي، ثم سميي وكنيي حجة الله في أرضه، وبقيته في عباده ابن الحسن بن علي، ذاك الذي يفتح الله على يديه مشارق الارض ومغاربها

In 'Ikmal-ud-Din' a tradition, through 'Jabir-il-Ju'fi', is narrated from Jabir-ibn- Abdillah thus:

I said:

"O Messenger of Allah, we have known Allah and His Apostle; then who is 'Ulil-Amr', those that Allah has made their obedience the same as your obedience?'

Then, the Prophet (S) said:

'O Jabir! they are, after me, my successors and the Guides of Muslims; the first of them is Ali-ibn-Abi Talib; then (Imam) Hassan, and (Imam) Husain; then Ali-ibn-il-Husain; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali, known in the Torah as Baqir, whom you will see.

O Jabir! When you visit him, give my regards to him. After him, there is Sadiq, -Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad; and after him Musa-ibn-Ja'far; then Ali-ibn-Musa; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali; then Ali-ibn-Muhammad, then Hassan-ibn-Ali; and after him (there comes) Al-Gha'im whose name and sir-name is the same as mine. He is Allah's Authority on the Earth and His Remainder amongst His servants.

*He is the son of (Imam) Hassan-ibn-Ali (a.-Askari). This is the very personality by whose hands Allah will open the Easts and Wests of the world.'*2

"قال الله تعالى: "وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى

"Nor does the Apostle speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed".3

قال النبي (ص): "إني تارك فيكم الثقلين، كتاب الله حبل ممدود من السماء إلى الأرض وعترتي أهل بيتي، وإن اللطيف الخبير أخبرني أنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض فانظروا بماذا تخلفوني" وفي حديث آخر: "لن تضلوا ما إن تمسكتم بهما"

The Prophet (S) said:

"I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things:

The book of Allah (i.e. the Quran), which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahlul-Bait; for verily Allah, The Merciful, The Aware, informed me that never, never, will these Two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance).

Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me)"

...and in another tradition it is added:

*"Never, never, shall you get astray if you attach yourself to these two".*4

Abul-Hassan-ir-Rida (a) said:

"May the Mercy of Allah be upon the servant who Keeps alive our commandment".

I asked him (a) how the one could keep your commandment alive.

He (a) said:

"He (can) learn our sciences and teach them to people. In fact if people knew (the merits) and goodnesses of our speech, surely they would follow us." 5

1. 4:59
2. Ikmal-ud-Din, Vol. 1, p. 253; with nearly similar meaning, in Yanabi-ul-Mawaddah, p. 117
3. 53:3,4
4. Ma'uni-ul-Akhbur, p. 90, tradition 2, & Musnad Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, Vol. 3, p.17, and other books from the Sunnite School and Shi 'ah School mentioned in Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, Vol 9, p. 309 to 375
5. Ma' ani-ul-Akhbar, p. 180 & 'Uyun-i-Akbar-ur-Rida, Vol. 1, p. 207

Surah Ar-Ra'd, Chapter 13

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

(The Thunder, No. 13)
(Revealed in Mecca)
43 verses in 6 sections

The Content of Surah Ar-Ra'd

As was mentioned aforetime, Meccan suras were revealed at the beginning of the call of the Prophet of Islam (S), when the hostile pagans seriously opposed to accept the Faith. Then these suras are mostly upon the issues of belief, specially invitation to Monotheism, struggling against idolatry, and proving the Resurrection.

While the Medinite suras, which were reveled after the expansion of Islam and the formation of the Islamic government, explain the Divine ordinances and religious social rules, according to the needs of the society.

This Surah, which is among the Meccan suras, also follows the same line. After making allusions to the legitimacy and greatness of the Qur'an, it refers to monotheism and states the secrets of creation which are the signs of the existence of the Pure Essence of Allah.

Then the Qur'an, in this Surah, discusses about Resurrection and the new life of mankind in Hereafter, as well as the Divine Court of Justice on the Reckoning Day. It completes this introduction of Monotheism and Resurrection by pointing to the responsibilities and duties of people.

Once again, it returns to the issue of Monotheism. Then it gives examples in order to make the right and wrong known. They are some manifest and sensible examples which are understandable for all.

In view of the fact that the ultimate worldly fruit of belief in Monotheism and Resurrection is the very constructive and practical programs, following these discussions, it invites people to; fulfilling the promise, union of kindred, patience and perseverance, spending out in charity secretly and openly, and leaving revenge.

And, finally, the content of this Surah guides people to search the depths of events in history through showing them the painful end of the disobedient nations in the past.

Thus, Surah Ar-Ra'd begins with some verses concerning Faith and convictions, and ends with introducing the deeds and activities which are helpful in the formation of human character.

Section 1: Signs of Allah in Nature

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

المر تِلْكَ ءَايَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Mim 'M', Ra 'R'. These are the verses of the Book; and that which has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, but most people do not believe."

At the beginning of this Holy Surah, again we have the abbreviated letters which are found in 29 suras of the Qur'an. The abbreviated letters here are a combination of 'Alif ', 'Lam', and 'Mim', which has occurred at the beginning of several suras, while 'Alif' 'Lam' and 'Ra' are mentioned at the beginning of some other suras.

Thus, in fact, this Surah is the only Surah that begins with ‘Alif, ‘Lam’, ‘Mim’, and ‘Ra’.

In view of the fact that the particular abbreviated letters at the beginning of every Surah seem to have a direct connection with the content of that Surah, it is probable that the present combination of the abbreviated letters at the beginning of Surah Ar-Ra‘d indicate that the content of this Surah consists of the contents of both group of suras which begin with ‘Alif, Lam, Mim’ and ‘Alif, Lam, Ra’. A careful attention over the contents of these suras also testifies this idea.

Since there have been talked upon the abbreviated letters of the Qur’an stated at the beginning of suras Al-Baqarah, ‘Al-i-‘Imran and Al-’A‘raf, their repetition is not so necessary here again.

The first verse, on the dignity of the Qur’an, says:

“...These are the verses of the Book; and that which has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth...”

There is no room for any doubt to be seen in it, because it is the statement of the objective facts of the world of creation, and its relation with humankind.

It is a truth that the Qur’an has not been mixed with falsehood. That is why the signs of its legitimacy is found even in its appearance so that there in no need of further reasoning.

Yet, the ignorant and empty-headed persons, who form the majority of people, do not believe in the revelations.

It says:

“...but most people do not believe.”

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 2

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَي عَلَي الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لأَجَلٍ مُسَمّي يُدَبِّرُ الأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ

2. “Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars which you (***can***) ***see, then He established Himself on ‘Arsh*** (***the Throne of authority***) ***and subjected the sun and the moon, each one runs unto an appointed term.***

He directs the affair (of existence). He explains the signs (in detail) so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.

Here, in this verse, which is stated after the abbreviated letters, the Qur’an refers to an important part of

the evidences of monotheism and the signs of Allah in the world of creation.

What a beautiful statement it is when it says:

"Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars which you (***can***) ***see..."***

This verse unveils a scientific fact which was not manifest for anyone at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an. At that time the Ptolemaic system governed over the scientific centers and the thoughts of people. According to it, the planets and heavens were considered as the layers of an onion which were located over each other, and the earth was in the center.

About one thousand years after the revelation of these verses, the knowledge of humankind realized that the mentioned theory was utterly wrong and the reality is that the celestial planets each rotates on a fix axis in its own position, suspending and also invariable, without having anything to lean against.

The only factor which supports them to be fix in their own particular rotations is the equilibrium resulted from the attractive and repelling forces.

This equilibrium of the attractive and repelling forces, as an unseen pillar, keeps the celestial planets fix in their positions and orbits.

Then, the verse continues saying:

"...then He established Himself on 'Arsh (***the Throne of authority***)***..."***

Next to the statement of creation of the heavens, and the existence of Allah's authority over them all, it refers to the subjection of the sun and the moon which is under His control.

The verse says:

"...and subjected the sun and the moon..."

But the material system of the world is not eternal, and all the celestial bodies, such as the sun and the moon, will continue to rotate along their defined orbits until an appointed time.

The verse says:

"...each one runs unto an appointed term..."

Next to that, the Qur'an implies that these acts of to and fro are not undue and do not exist with no result, because it is Allah Who arranges everything. Then there is an account for every movement, and every account has been appointed for a particular aim.

The verse continues saying:

“...He directs the affair (of existence)...”

Then, it adds:

“...He explains the signs (in detail) so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.”

Explanations

1. There are some verses in the Qur’an which indicate that Allah maintains the heavens and the earth. Among them are the followings:

A. ***“Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars which you (can) see...”*** (The above mentioned verse).

B. ***“Verily Allah holds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught; and if they come to naught none besides Him can hold them back...” (Surah Fatir, No. 35, verse 41)***

C. ***“...And He withholds the heaven from falling on the earth...”***

In Tafsir Al-Mizan, ‘Allamah Tabataba’i says that the purpose of the Qur’anic word /tafsil/ (explanation) is separation of the celestial planets and the earth from each other. The observation of this separation makes us aware of the separation of people in the Hereafter.

The Arabic word /‘amad/ is the plural form of /‘am▯d/ which means ‘pillar’. However, when we do not see something, it cannot be taken as a reason for its inexistence.

Imam Rida (as) said:

“There are some pillars, but you do not see them”.[1]

There is a very attractive tradition in this field narrated from Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) who has said:

“These stars, which are in the sky, are some cities like the cities on the earth, every one of which is connected with another by means of a pillar of light.”[2]

Could there be found a more expressive and clearer meaning than ‘invisible pillar’ or ‘a pillar of light’ in the expansion of the literature of that time for mentioning the concept of ‘attractive force’ and its resulting equilibrium against the ‘repelling force’?

D. The creation of the world with no Resurrection is a vain action. The reference for Resurrection is the same reasoning of theism. The same One Who creates and directs the affairs of existence, can accomplish the Resurrection and Hereafter, too.

“...so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.”

Once Ali-ibn-Abi Talib (as) was asked how Allah reckons (the deeds of) all mankind in Hereafter. Then he answered:

"In the same way that He sustains all humankind."[3]

The Subjection of the Sun and the Moon:

The above-mentioned verse indicates that Allah (s.w.t.) has subjected the sun and the moon. There are also many other verses in the Qur'an which denote that the entire celestial stars, all beings on the earth, the day and the night, and the like of them are wholly subjected to mankind.

In one occurrence, it says:

"...and He has made the rivers subservient to you."[4]

By another statement in the same verse the holy Qur'an says:

"...and He has made the ships subservient to you..." [5]

In another occurrence, the Qur'an says:

"And He has made the night and the day, and the sun and the moon subservient to you..." [6]

In a holy verse, the Qur'an says:

"And He has made the constantly moving sun and the moon subservient to you..."[7]

The Qur'an also in another occurrence says:

"And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh meat from it..."[8]

In another occurrence, the Qur'an questions:

"Do you not see that Allah has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the earth...?"[9]

And, finally, somewhere else the Qur'an says:

"And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself..." [10]

From the totality of these verses, it is well understood that: Man is the most complete being in the world of creation, and, from the view of Islam, he is so worthy and respected that Allah has made all other beings subservient to him; i.e., it is the Man who is the representative of Allah, and whose heart is the place fit for the Light of Allah.

However, it is evident that the Qur'anic word /tasxir/ (subjection), referred to in these verses, does not

mean that man can bring all these things under his own command, but it implies that they are alongside his benefit and service. For example, the celestial planets reflect the light for him, or have some other advantages for him, which he may utilize.

No school of thought, other than Islam, has considered so much worth and high rank for Man, and in no other doctrine and philosophy Man has such an exalted position and personality. These are the specialties of the ideology of Islam which promote the value of man high as such.

Knowing this fact has a deep moral effect in man; because, when he mediates that Allah has bestowed upon him so much grandeur in a state that every thing; such as: the sun, the moon, the celestial sphere and all other things, are at his service, he will not tend to negligence and meanness so that he becomes as captive to lusts, wealth, ranks, and ungodly forces.

Such a man is the one who removes all barriers and promotes high and higher.

How can one says that the sun and the moon are not at the service of man while they illuminate and warm the scene of his life by their lights? Without sunshine, there will be no movement and development on the earth.

Moreover, by its gravity, the sun causes the earth to rotate on its orbit, the moon causes the low tides and the high tides appear in the seas, which are the source of many blessings and benefits for man.

The ships on the seas, the rivers, the day and the night, and the like of them, each serves and helps man in a particular way. A careful observation and contemplation over them, and over the regular order they have, makes it clear that they are some manifest evidences unto the Greatness, Power and Wisdom of the Creator.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 3

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَاراً وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

3. “And He it is Who spread the earth and placed mountains and streams in it and inserted in it two pairs of the each kind of fruit. He covers the day with the night. Certainly, there are signs in these matters for a people who reflect.”

This verse reveals the Divine signs in the upper universe and calls on man to meditate on the earth, the mountains, the streams the various kinds of fruits, and the dawn and sunset, saying that Allah spread the earth so as to make it ready for man to live in it and to grow plants and breed livestock in it.

The verse says:

"And He it is Who spread the earth..."

The Qur'an then goes on dealing with the issue of the emergence of mountains implying that Allah has placed mountains in the earth.

It continues saying:

"...and placed mountains and streams in it..."

These are the very same mountains which are referred to as /'aut ad/ meaning the nails of the earth.

Probably, it is because mountains are interconnected with each other from underneath and armour-like they have covered the face of the earth so as to counter-balance not only the internal pressure, which is being exerted from within the crust of the earth, but also to counteract the extraordinary gravity power of the moon and its ebb and tide from outside.

Therefore, they are meant to respond to the continuous earth tremors and earth quakes as well as the tensions which are brought about as a result of them, and to pave the way for calm and relaxation on the terrestrial globe for man to live in.

In the meantime, the verse, alluding to the rivers and the springs which are flowing on the earth, declares that there are streams placed therein.

The irrigation system of the earth supported by mountains and the interdependence of the mountains with the streams are noteworthy, for many of the mountains on the earth deposit water in the form of snow within the cracks of their valleys or on their tops.

This snow eventually and gradually melts and travels from higher altitude regions to the lower altitude regions owing to the natural law of gravitation. Sometimes also, there are lakes formed at the outskirts of the mountains.

Then, the Qur'an makes mention of foodstuffs and fruits which grow, as a result of the water and sunshine, from the earth and are best for human nutrition, implying that He has placed two pairs of each type of fruit in the earth. Here is allusion made to the fact that fruits are living beings that contain male and female cells which are fertilized through the process of cross – fertilization.

The verse says:

"...and inserted in it two pairs of the each kind of fruit..."

Although 'Linet', the Swedish famous botanist and scientist succeeded himself in the discovery of general and universal fertilization inside the world of plants in the mid eighteenth century, the Glorious Qur'an revealed this truth more than one thousand and four hundred years ago which can by itself be considered as one of its miracles, showing the magnitude of this great celestial Book.

As man's life and that of all other beings, especially that of the plants and fruits, can not go on without an exact and an accurate system of the timing of the day and the night, the Qur'an refers to it in another part of the verse, indicating that He covers day with night and He veils it.

The verse says:

"...He covers the day with the night..."

The reason for this is that once the dark veil of night does not cover the light, continuous sunshine burns away all plants, and no trace of the fruits and, generally speaking, of living beings would be left on the face of the earth.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an points out that, in the foregoing discussions, there are signs for those who meditate.

The verse says:

"...Certainly, there are signs in these matters for a people who reflect."

Honestly speaking, those who contemplate can witness the power of the Omnipotence and unending Omniscience of the Creator very clearly.

Explanations

1. The previous verse dealt with the skies while this verse relates to the earth and earthly blessings.

2. The Arabic term /rawasi/ is the plural form of /rasiyah/ and it signifies 'firmness'. That is why, mountains are alluded to as /rawasi/. The terms /zauj/ and /zaujan/ both mean male and female.

3. The male and female in plants are often in one tree and sometimes in one blossom and sometimes in two trees or two blossoms.[11]

4. The Qur'anic phrase /madd al 'ard/ probably refers to the emerging of the earth from under the water which has been mentioned in Islamic quotations as /dahw ul 'ard/. This probability is consonant with and compatible with the views of the contemporary geologists who claim that the earth has been originally covered with water. (Allah knows the best.)

5. The world of creation is based on a 'pair system'.

The pairing system in plants:

"...and He puts for every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs)." [12]

The pairing system in animals, where the Qur'an says:

"...He made mates for you from among yourself and mates of the cattle too..."[13]

Pairing in Human Beings:

"He created mates from your own kind for you." [14]

Pairing in everything:

"And of everything We have created pairs..."[15]

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 4

وَفِي الأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُّتَجَاوِرَاتٌ وَجَنَّاتٌ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَي بِمَآءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَي بَعْضٍ فِي الأُكُلِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

4. "And in the earth there are tracts, side by side, and gardens of (different) grapes and corn-fields and palm trees, like and unlike, watered through one irrigation system, and We made some of them excel in taste than others. Verily, there are signs in this for a people who understand."

The Arabic term /sinw an/ contrary to its appearance, which is in the form of dual (referring to two), is the plural form of /sinw/ and means 'a branch which stems out of the principal tree'. It refers here to being similar or identical.

In this noble verse, we are confronted a series of interesting geological and botanical issues which are all the signs of a predetermined system of creation. The Qur'an first mentions that there are different tracts side by side in the earth, and there are gardens and trees which have different kinds of grapes and different plantations, and palm trees as well.

The verse says:

"And in the earth there are tracts, side by side, and gardens of (different) grapes and corn-fields and palm trees..."

The amazing thing is that these trees and their various kinds take their roots from one basic stem on some occasion, and at other times they have their roots from different stems. The verse continues saying:

"...like and unlike, watered through one irrigation system..."

This sentence probably provides clues as to the issue of the potentialities of trees for grafting which is occasionally based on the grafting of several parts on the original stem, each of which develop and consequently a special kind of fruit will be delivered.

What is more amazing is that they are all watered with one type of water.

“Watered through one irrigation system”.

In spite of all this, Allah has excelled some of these trees over others in their type of fruit.

The verse says:

“…and We made some of them excel in taste than others…”

Does each of these clues not provide us with sufficient reasons as to the leadership which is unique in its origin and is knowledgeable in its system? It is here where, at the end of the verse, the Qur’an declares that there are signs in these matters as to the magnitude of Allah for those who contemplate.

The verse says:

“…Verily, there are signs in this for a people who understand.”

Explanation

The variety of fruits as to the colour, taste and smell and their different forms all have their origin in the Divine power, and are consonant with Allah’s will. Otherwise, one kind of water could not generate more than one type of fruit.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 5

وَإِن تَعْجَبْ فَعَجَبٌ قَوْلُهُمْ أَءِذَا كُنَّا تُرَاباً أَءِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ أُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَأُوْلَئِكَ الأَغْلالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَأُوْلَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

5. “And if you do wonder, then wondrous is their sayings: ‘ What, when we turn into dust, Will we then surly be in a new creation?’ They are those who disbelieve in their Lord and these shall have chains on their necks, and they are the people of the Fire, abiding therein for ever.’”

Addressing the Prophet (S), this verse implies that he should not be amazed at the denial of the prophecy by the people, for they are also astonished at Allah’s power in transforming the dead back into life and do not believe it.

The unbelievers in the Resurrection have not provided any proof for the impossibility of resurrection and they only consider its occurrence as remote. On the contrary, besides mentioning Allah’s Justice and Wisdom, which necessitates the existence of the Hereafter, the Qur’an has reiterated on many occasions and has provided answers to this denial.

The verse says:

"And if you do wonder, then wondrous is their sayings: 'What, when we turn into dust, Will we then surly be in a new creation?' They are those who disbelieve in their Lord and these shall have chains on their necks, and they are the people of the Fire, abiding therein for ever.'"

On one occasion it implies that if they were in doubt as to the advent of the Hereafter, they would remember their original creation and as to how Allah created them out of earth and sperm.16

Elsewhere, it commands the Prophet (S) to tell his people that: He Who originally created them will also recreate them in the Resurrection Day, and there is no room for any astonishment.17

Therefore, the denial and refutation of resurrection means the negation of Allah's power, His Justice, as well as His Wisdom which implies profanity and paganism.

Such a person, who negates resurrection, will be involved with superstition and ignorance as his entire outlook centers around worldly aims and is entangled with material benefits and selfishness, and he will also be held in the chains of the Divine punishment in the Hereafter.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 6

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِمُ الْمَثُلاتُ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَي ظُلْمِهِمْ وَإِنّ َرَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

6. "And they ask you to hasten on the evil** (**the chastisement**) **before the good while there have been exemplary punishments before them. And verily, your Lord is full of forgiveness for people despite their injustice; and verily your Lord is strict in retribution."

The Arabic term /maul at/ is the plural form of /maulah/ which denotes punishment and penalty that man will be inflicted upon. Sometimes, enmity and obstinacy reaches the point where one is inclined to desire death and not to accept the truth.

There are allusions made in the Glorious Qur'an to the examples of such moods and feelings. Among them one is that the pagans used to say:

"O' Allah! It this** (**Qur'an**) **is indeed the Truth from You, then storm us with stone from the sky, or bring us a painful punishment..."18

Elsewhere, the Qur'an says:

"If We had sent down it to any of non-Arabs, and had he recited it to them, they would not have believed in it."19

Or the people of the Book would tell the pagans and idol worshippers:

"...These are better guided on the way than those who have believed (*in Islam*)*."*[20]

While, the people of the Book among the disbelievers are closer to Islam than the pagans. They were kept away from expressing the truth because of their obstinacy.

In the meantime, the haste shown by some people in the descending of the Divine punishment then may be due to the following reasons:

The ignorance and oblivion due to the history of the predecessors and the lack of belief in the Divine punishment and considering it as remote matter.

Jealousy towards the possessions of others. As it is recorded in history, upon the accession of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) to the Imamat, someone desired his own death for he could not tolerate the event. This event has been mentioned and alluded to on the occasion of the revelation of Surah Al-Ma' arij, verse No. 1.

The feelings of being cut off, depressed, and reaching complete deadlock.

Ridiculing and lack of acceptance, even at the expense of losing one's life.

Therefore, the verse indicates that: instead of asking for Allah's blessings, they requested hastening of His punishment.

The verse says:

"And they ask you to hasten on the evil** (**the chastisement**) **before the good while there have been exemplary punishments before them..."

Do they think that Allah's punishment is mere deception, despite the fact that there were divine penalties which were sent down upon the previous rogue and unruly nations the news of which have been recorded on the pages of history and in the heart of the earth?

Then the verse adds implication that the Lord is forgiving towards the people though they are committing cruelty, and,at the same time, He is capable of inflicting severe punishment as well.

The verse says:

"...And Verily, your Lord is full of forgiveness for people despite their injustice; and verily your Lord is strict in retribution."

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 7

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِن رَّبِّهِ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

7. "And those who disbelieve say: 'Why has there not been sent down a sign to him from his Lord? (O' Prophet!) You are only a Warner, and there is a guide for every people."

Ibn Abbas has been quoted to say that the blissful Prophet (S) putting his hand on his chest, said: /'anal mun�ir/ (I am the Warner), and then alluding to Ali-Ibn-Abi-Talib (as), he said:

"You are the guide, those who will be guided after me will be guided through you."[21]

Here, the holy verse deals with one of the criticisms of the obstinate pagans concerning the prophecy, saying that Allah did not send the Prophet (S) with miracles or signs.

The verse says:

"And those who disbelieve say: 'Why has there not been sent down a sign to him from his Lord?..."

It goes without saying that one of the functions of the Prophet (S) is to present miracles as documentation for his legitimacy and his actual interconnection with the Divine revelation.

However, the opponents of the prophets have not always been entertaining sound intentions. That is, they did not seek miracles for the sake of discovering the truth but, to show their arrogance and disobedience against the Truth, every time they asked for an odd miracle.

So, when facing such individuals, the Prophet (S), without accepting their desires, used to say that performing miracles is in Allah's hands and it is by His commands that such things happen; then his duty was to guide and train people.

Therefore, in response to these vain requests, the Qur'an continues telling the Prophet (S) that he is only a Warner and to provide people with instructions and guidance.

The verse says:

"...(O' Prophet!) You are only a Warner..."

In actual fact, the Qur'an implies that these pagans have forgotten the primary objective of the prophet which is the issue of admonition and calling of people towards Allah. They have wrong thought that his primary function has been to perform miracles.

It is interesting to note that the difference between the Qur'anic terms /'in�ar/ and /hid ayat/ is that, the

former relates to the leading of the misled to the right path and providing them with self-awareness, while the latter deals with guiding people and directing them forward after they have adjusted their way in the right direction.

Therefore, in various quotations from the Prophet (S) in the books of Shi‘ite and Sunni people, it is quoted that he said: he provided admonitions and Ali was the leader, by whom the guided are guided.

We have it in 26 traditions that, the objective meaning of /h ad/ (guide) is the Immaculate Imams (as).

1. Bihar, vol. 60, p. 79, and Burhan, vol. 2, p. 278
2. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 2, p. 574
3. Tafsir-ul-Kabir
4. Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 32
5. Ibid
6. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 12, and Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 33
7. Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 33
8. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 14
9. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 65
10. Surah Al-J athiyah, No. 45, verse 13
11. Tafsir-ul-Furqan
12. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 5
13. Surah Shur a, No. 42, verse 11
14. Surah Ar-R m, No. 30, verse 21
15. Surah Az-Zariyat, No. 51, verse 49
16. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 5 says:

“O’ people! If you are in doubt about the raising, then surely We created you from dust, then from a small seed, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you; and We cause what We please to stay in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity; and of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after having knowledge he does not know anything; and you see the earth sterile land, but when We send down on it the water, it stirs and swells and brings forth of every kind a beautiful herbage.”

17. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 79
18. Surah Al-’Anf al, No. 8, verse 32
19. Surah Ash-Shu‘ar a, No. 26, verses 198, 199
20. Surah An-Nis a, No. 4, verse 51
21. Tafsir-ul-Kabir, vol. 19, p. 14, ’Ihq aq-ul-Haqq, vol. 3, p.87

Section 2: Allah, the Almighty Creator of the

Universe

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 8

اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِندَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ

8. “Allah knows what every female carries** (**in her womb**) **and what the wombs absorb and** (**that**) **in which they increase, and there is a measure with Him of everything.”

At first, the verse deals with Allah’s knowledge as to the carrying by female of whatever it is pregnant with, whether it has got any womb like human beings or animals, or it has got no wombs like in animate objects or plants. Later, allusion is made to the beings which have got wombs.

The Arabic term /qayd/ means handling (of the sperm) into oneself or infiltration. That is, Allah is aware of that ‘water’ which is absorbed by the womb and which undergoes alterations and growth.

At any rate, one finds that the holy verse deals with the comprehensive knowledge of Allah namely, His knowledge of the system of creation and of His subjects’ behavior and, finally, of everything.

At first, the Qur’an implies that Allah is aware of what every female carries in her womb. Not only does He know of the gender and sexuality of the foetus, but He also is aware of all the characteristics, potentialities, interests, and his inherent potential powers as well.

And He also knows all the shortcomings of the wombs which they may throw away before the time is ripe.

The verse says:

“Allah knows what every female carries** (**in her womb**) **and what the wombs absorb and** (**that**) **in which they increase…”

And everything has got its measures with Allah, so that one may not think that all these extremes, whether less or more, are for no reason, as is the case with the parts of the foetus and womb’s blood which are accountable by all means.

The verse continues saying:

“…and there is a measure with Him of everything.”

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 9

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ

9. “He knows the unseen and the seen, He is the Great, the Most High.”

The seen and the unseen is an issue involved only in the finite man whose five senses are even more limited than those of many animals. However, such a matter does not sound meaningful for Allah Who is the Creator of the world of unseen and that of the seen.

The verse says:

“He knows the unseen and the seen, He is the Great, the Most High.”

Imam Sadiq (as) has declared on the first phrase of the above verse that:

The unseen signifies what has not existed and /šah adat/ (seen) signifies what has existed already.[1]

In the meantime, Allah (s.w.t.) is superior in every aspect of perfection and is cleared of whatever default and defect there might be.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 10

سَوَآءٌ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَسَرَّ الْقَوْلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِالَّيْلِ وَسَارِبُ بِالنَّهَارِ

10. “It is alike (for Him) whether any of you conceals his speech or speaks openly, and whether he hides himself by night or he who exposes himself during day-time.

This noble verse, which is apparently an explanation of and complementary to the previous verse, is one of the many verses of the Qur’an which refers to Allah’s knowledge as to the small and big, open and hidden acts of man and even man’s thought and intentions.

If men believe in such knowledge by Allah, it can be the best factor in one’s modesty and virtue and the greatest means for one’s education for it can encourage the righteous and warn the evildoers.

It is interesting that, in this verse Allah has mentioned the fact of His knowledge unto the secret speech and hidden acts done at night before referring to open words and the manifest activities in the day.

The verse says:

“It is alike (for Him) whether any of you conceals his speech or speaks openly, and whether he

hides himself by night or he who exposes himself during day-time.”

The Arabic term /s arib/ is derived from /sarib/ which originally means ‘running water’ though it also refers to the one who goes on with a job during the day.

At any rate, Allah’s knowledge is identical with respect to all things, unlike our knowledge and our awareness is relative with respect to the things, in some cases it is deeper while in other cases, it is less deep or at zero point in some cases.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 11

لَهُ مُعَقّبَاتٌ مِن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُغَيّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّي يُغَيّرُوا مَا بِاَنفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءاً فَلا مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُم مِن دُونِهِ مِن وَالٍ

11. “There are (***angels***) ***in succession, before him and behind him, who protect him by Allah’s command. Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition. And if Allah intends evil upon a people, there is no turning it back; and they have, apart from Him, no protector.”***

The Qur’anic term /mu‘aqqib at/ is the Arabic plural form of /mu‘aqqibah/ and the ending letter ‘t’, included in it, does not allude to its grammatical gender as feminine, rather, it implies exaggeration like the Arabic word /‘allamah/.

Therefore, the subject of the term /yahfazunahu/ is masculine. Certainly, the purpose in the Qur’anic term /mu‘aqqib at/ is not to be considered as chasing and hunting man so as to be regarded as incompatible with the phrase /bayna yadayh/ (before him and behind him). On the contrary, it refers to succession and consecutive arrival of the angels during, day and night.

The Qur’anic phrase /’amrullah/, mentioned in this verse, does not imply the penalty and punishment of Allah, for it does not make any sense to say that the angels protect man from Divine punishment, but it implies that they protect man from dangers and natural accidents; since the nature has been created by Allah and whatever goes on in it, is done in accordance with His will.

Many verses of the Qur’an and Islamic traditions indicate that there are angels that guard and protect human beings from dangers and calamities and record their deeds. They protect them from those dangers which are not seriously ordained under the Will of Allah.

Based upon the Islamic narrations in conformity with the Will of Allah, on various occasions, the protecting angels are allowed to abandon their role and allow some harm to come to man in accordance with Divine wisdom.

Certainly, according to the inferences from quotations, as soon as the decisive Will of Allah arrives, the protecting angels abandon their protection mission and leave man to his doom and death which is certain to happen.

Thus there are two sides to Allah's commandments: those that are certain to happen and those that are not certain. The angels only save man from those accidents which are not certain to occur. It goes without saying that such a protection in fact does not relieve man of his duties and freedom of choice. The destinies of individuals and nations are always in their own hands.

The protection of angels is not confined to that of the lives of men but it also involves their acts as well as their faith and thought against deviations and satanic temptations as the Qur'anic term /yahfaz□nah□/ includes both the soul and the body.

Imam Sajjad (as), alluding to this verse, said:

"The sins which alter blessings consist of: oppressing the people, ingratitude of Allah, abandoning of the good deeds which one is used to do."[2]

This holy verse deals with human societies and not with individuals one by one. That is, a decent righteous society is covered by Allah's blessings, and a deviant one will get entangled with the Divine punishment.

However, this formula does not adapt to the case of a righteous individual and an indecent one, for one may be righteous though he may, for divine trial or experimental purposes, get involved with difficulties; or one may be viscous though he may be momentarily left to himself for the respite given to him by Allah.

Any way, we read in the foregoing verse that because of the fact that 'He knows the Unseen and the Seen', Allah is aware of the visible as well as the invisible nature of men and is Omnipresent and Omnipotent.

The Qur'an adds in this verse that in addition to this, Allah is also the Protector and Guardian of His servants. There are agents commissioned for men to oversee things around man consecutively and to protect him from evil events.

The verse says:

"There are (angels) in succession, before him and behind him, who protect him by Allah's command..."

However, to enable one not to mix every thing that such a protection and guardianship is unconditional and one can throw oneself down the pit and get involved in random acts or commit every kind of sin which merits Divine penalties, still expecting Allah's angels to protect him, the Qur'an adds:

"...Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition..."

To avoid any misunderstandings as to the meaningfulness of Divine punishments despite the existence of Divine agents whose mission is to protect man, the Qur'an adds at the end of the verse that once Allah determines to inflict penalties on a nation or a population there is no reversal or defense for that nation, which will have no protector except Allah.

The verse continues saying:

"...And if Allah intends evil upon a people, there is no turning it back; and they have, apart from Him, no protector."

It is for this reason that once Allah's decree is issued as to the punishment or annihilation of a nation, the guardians and the protectors distance themselves, submitting man to his doom.

The Alterations Must Have Their Onset in Ourselves

The Qur'anic sentence:

"...Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change any alterations in the mood of any their own condition..."

which has been mentioned throughout the Qur'an on two occasions with a slight difference, reflects a general and universal law.

This Qur'anic principle, which explains one of the most important social programs of Islam, informs us that whatever external changes which occur rest on the internal changes of nations and tribes, and whatever victory or defeat is inflicted upon a nation usually has its origin in this principle.

Therefore, those who seek external factors for their self-acquittal are indeed mistaken, for if such infernal powers have not got any basis within a society, they are left crippled.

This Qur'anic principle implies that in order to put an end to all misfortunes and miseries, one must turn to a revolution from within, a revolution in thinking and in culture, a revolution in faith and in ethics.

In cases of miseries and deadlocks, one must immediately turn to the discovery of weak points in oneself and clear one's soul and self from them by reconstructing himself with repentance and returning to Allah in order to wash his soul and self and to have a rebirth and a renaissance and convert one's defeats and frustrations into success.

Thereby, we all know that Allah's Will stands as superior to all wills, and His protection extends as far as man does not spoil His blessings. Otherwise, one would be deprived of the Divine favour and would be

left to him.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 12

هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفاً وَطَمَعاً وَيُنشِئُ السَّحَابَ الثِّقَالَ

12. “It is He Who shows you the lightning for fear and hope and produces heavy clouds.”

The blissful Qur’an once again here deals with the monotheistic verses and the signs of Allah’s magnitude and glory as well as the secrets of creation.

At first, it alludes to the lightning which emerges from within the pieces of clouds, and implies that it is Allah Who offers you the lightning which is a source of fear as well as of greed. The verse says:

“It is He Who shows you the lightning for fear and hope…”

On the one hand, its shining rays astound one’s eyes and generate and incite terror in him.

On the other hand, as it is usually accompanied by raining which offers the thirsty desert pure water, and waters the trees and fields, it creates hope and incites greed in man, between which, he passes sensitive moments.

Then the Qur’an declares that it is He Who creates heavy clouds which are fully-loaded and which are capable of watering thirsty lands.

The verse continues saying:

“…and produces heavy clouds.”

The main thing to remember is that although natural causes pave the way for the emergence of thunder and lightning, nevertheless, the true source and origin of all these factors is Allah. The discovery of the laws of physics and chemistry of the nature must not diminish in any way our faith in Allah, for the nature and its laws are themselves created by Allah.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 13

وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلاَئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ

13. “And The thunder glorifies Him with His praise, and the angels, too, in awe of Him; and He sends the thunderbolts so as to smite with them whomever He pleases, while they dispute about

Allah, and He is mighty in wrath."

This noble verse deals with the thunderbolt which is never separable from lightning.

The verse says:

"And The thunder glorifies Him with His praise..."

Certainly, this vibrating echoing sound of the world of nature, which is coupled with the lightning phenomenon, both act towards one goal which is the glorification of Allah. In other words, the thunder is a vocal expression of lightning, which reveals the nature of the system of creation and the magnitude of the Creator.

Not only the sound of the thunder and other particles of the material world glorify and thank Him, but all the angels are also busy thanking praising Him because of their awe and fear.

The verse continues saying:

"...and the angels, too, in awe of Him..."

The divine angels are frightened that they might have had shortcomings and failures as to the execution of their duties and responsibilities assigned to them by Allah in the system of existence, thus facing Divine punishment.

We know well that the duties and responsibilities have always been awe–inspiring and frightening for those who feel responsible, that kind of constructive fear which derives and directs them to action.

In order to give a further explanation concerning thunder and lightning, the Qur'an alludes to thunderbolts, where it declares:

"...and He sends the thunderbolts so as to smite with them whomever He pleases..."

Despite all these and in spite of observing all signs of Allah's magnitude, comparing them to the inferiority of man with respect to catastrophes, even in the case of a celestial spark, there are some ignorant groups who go on disputing about Allah.

The verse says:

"...while they dispute about Allah..."

They dispute while Allah's powers know no limits and His punishment would be painful and He punishes severely.

The verse concludes:

“...and He is mighty in wrath.”

Explanations

In the Qur’anic literature, the totality of existence is ever engaged in praising the glory of Allah; that kind of praising which is based on knowledge and cognition and free will.

What is interesting in this respect is that the Qur’an explains this subject in such a way that it attracts the attention of all, and obliterates all matters which give rise to disbelief and loss of faith, among which one may point to the following:

The application of such noble words as /sabbaha/ or /yusabbihu/ which explicitly express the meaning of praise and glorification.

The repetition of this subject in the various Suras of the Qur’an.

The raising of the issue of the glorification of Allah by all beings at the beginning of the Surah, and immediately after the holy phrase /bismill ah/.

The use of such words as the humility of the entire domain of existence:

“...all are obedient to him”[3].

The prostration of the stars and the plants:

“And the herbs and the trees do adore (***Him***)***.”***[4]

The obedience of the skies and the earth:

“...they both said: ‘We come willingly.”[5]

The awareness that all beings are in a state of prayer and gratitude:

“...He knows the prayer of each and its glorification...”[6]

Addressing of man as to his lack of understanding of the expression of gratitude of other beings:

“...but you do not understand their glorification...”[7]

The Arabic term /mih al/ is derived from /hilah/ which means every kind of hidden and covert way of seeking a remedy, and since this process is interconnected with and interdependent on knowledge and power, therefore, commentators have interpreted the Qur’anic holy phrase /šadidulmihal/ as ‘mighty in power and punishment’.

In some Qur’anic verses, the acts of gratitude to Allah and glorifying Him have been mentioned with

together:

“The thunder glorifies Him with His praise…” [8]

“and there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise…” [9]

It is just like the bowing and prostration within which we say:

“Glorified is my Lord, the Exalted, and with His praise”

“Glorified is my Lord, the greatest, and with His praise”.

It has been recorded in various Sunni traditions that the sublime Prophet (S) used to interrupt his speech and start praying as soon as he heard the sound of thunderbolts and he would encourage others to do the same. [10]

Thunderbolts and being thunder-stricken is not an accidental matter. On the contrary, it is in accordance with Allah’s will and the laws of the Divine nature.

Thunderbolts are the Divine punishment which are inflicted on the sinful nations like the people of Thamūd:

“…So there seized them the thunderbolt of a disgracing chastisement for what they used to earn.” [11]

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 14

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لاَ يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُم بِشَيْءٍ إِلاَّ كَبَاسِطِ كَفَّيْهِ إِلَي الْمَآءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ وَمَا دُعَآءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلاَّ فِي ضَلاَلٍ

14. “To Him** (**alone**) **is the call of Truth; and those to whom they call, besides Him, will answer them nothing, but like one who stretches his two hands towards the water so that it may reach his mouth, while it does not reach it. And the prayer of disbelievers is only in error”

This holy verse refers to two points. The first is that: Allah’s call belongs to Him alone. That is, He will accept us whenever we call Him. He is both well aware of the prayers of His servants and He also has the authority to fulfill their wishes.

The verse says:

“To Him** (**alone**) **is the call of Truth…”

Another point raised here is that calling the idols and requesting them is absurd and erroneous, for those

whom the pagans call, other than Allah, and seek refuge in them for fulfilling their wishes, their call and their prayers will be left unanswered.

The verse continues saying:

"...and those to whom they call, besides Him, will answer them nothing..."

Then, as it is the case with the Qur'anic method, in order to visualize this rational subject, including the feeling of beauty and explicitness, the Qur'an brings a sensible and expressive similitude by declaring that:

Those who call on other than Allah are like the ones who stretch their hand-palms towards water so as to fetch water and take it to their mouth, but such a thing will never happen.

The verse says:

"...but like one who stretches his two hands towards the water so that it may reach his mouth, while it does not reach it..."

Can one sit next to a well and stretch his hands and send it to his mouth instantly and just by pointing to it? Can one expect such a thing to happen by any other one than he who is foolish or lunatic?

To stress the issue further, the Qur'an at the end of the verse indicates that: the prayers of the pagans from their idols is nothing more than taking steps in the dark, and being misled.

The verse says:

"...And the prayer of disbelievers is only in error"

What a course of being misled can be worse than that man does his utmost to go astray which may lead him nowhere!

Explanations

Calling on people to worship the sole Allah and alienating oneself from the attention of others, and regarding Him as the only effective factor has been frequently referred to in the Qur'an, among which one may name the followings:

"I answer the prayer of every supplicant when he calls on Me..."[12]

However, if he goes to others and calls on them for the fulfillment of his needs, he must beware that they do not hear and if they hear, they will not accept.

The Qur'an says:

"If you call on them they will not listen to your call, and even if they were to listen, they cannot answer you…"[13]

The confined man naturally requires a safe haven in the adventurous life of the world.

The divine prophets introduce Allah as the safe haven:

"To Him (***alone***) ***is the call of Truth…".***

However, other people's help, such as the despots, are either for fooling him or for his exploitation or propagation and for their own protection of positions, etc. What is not worth consideration to them, is the 'man' himself.

Man is inherently truth seeking and thirsty for the Truth but he often loses his way to obtain it. Except for his faith in Allah and love of Him and that his prayers be directed to Him, nothing else will quench the thirst of man who infinitely aspires.

"…so that it may reach his mouth, while it does not reach it…"

For, anything inferior to Allah is a mirage and calling on others is of no avail.

Therefore, he who sincerely calls Allah will return not empty-handed. Returning empty-handed is because of focusing towards other than Him.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 15

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ طَوْعاً وَكَرْهاً وَظِلاَلُهُم بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالآصَالِ

15. "And whoever is in the skies and on the earth prostrates for Allah willingly or unwillingly, and (***so do***) ***their shadows in the mornings and the evenings."***

In order to explain how the idol-worshippers have become separated from the mainstream of the world of existence and have been led stray one by one, this verse proclaims that all those who are in the heavens and on the earth willingly or reluctantly obey and submit themselves and prostrate before Allah every morning and evening.

The verse says:

"And whoever is in the skies and on the earth prostrates for Allah willingly or unwillingly, and (***so do***) ***their shadows in the mornings and the evenings."***

What is the objective of prostration by the beings? In such cases, prostration signifies utmost modesty, humbleness, and submission. Nevertheless, the humility and prostration of some groups of creatures is

done in the genetic form.

That is, they are only submissive in face of the laws of the world of existence and creation. However, some others do have religious prostration in addition to the genetic prostration, which means that they prostrate before Allah willingly and with their own free will.

The Arabic expression: /tau‘an wa karhan/ (willingly and unwillingly) might point out to the fact that the believers willingly prostrate before Allah and exhibit their modesty, while the unbelievers, who are not ready to perform such a ritual, all the particles of their entity are submissive to Allah's commandments in accordance with the laws of creation, whether they want it or not.

Explanations

Perhaps the objective in mind as regards the prostration of the shadows is their manner in which they are being cast on the floor, which implies that the entire universe is obedient to and prostrates before Allah, and that this mode of existential prostration of all beings is a continuous process.

The Arabic term /’asal/ is the plural form of /’usul/, which itself is the plural of /’asil/, and is derived from /’asl/ which means ‘the end of the day’.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 16

قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ قُلِ اللَّهُ قُلْ أَفَاتَّخَذْتُم مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ لاَ يَمْلِكُونَ لأَنْفُسِهِم نَفْعاً ولاَ ضَرّاً قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الاَعْمَي وَالْبَصِيرُ أَمْ هَلْ تَسْتَوِي الظُّلُمَاتُ وَالنُّورُ أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِم قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

16. “Say: ‘Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?’ Say: ‘Allah’. (Then) say: ‘Why is it that you have taken guardians other than Him who own no profit and loss for themselves?’ Say: ‘Are the blind and the eyed equal? Or are the darknesses and light identical? Or have they set up partners for Allah who have created (something) like His creation, so that creation is all alike to them?’ Say: ‘Allah is the Creator of everything, and He is the One, the All-Dominant’.”

As there were numerous discussions as to the cognition of Allah's Existence in the previous holy verses, the Qur’an has devoted the discussion in this verse to the mistakes of the pagans and the worshippers of the idols. It follows this discussion on several fronts.

At first, the Qur’an addresses the Prophet (S) and tells him to ask them about the creator and administrator of the heavens and the earth.

It declares:

“Say: ‘Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?’…”

Then, before that the Prophet (S) waits for any answer from them, it immediately issues the decree to him (S) that he provides the best answer to this query, proclaiming that:

“…Say: ‘Allah’…”

Then blaming them and reproaching them with this sentence the Qur’an issues another query for the Prophet (S) to ask them, saying whether they have designated any one other than Allah as their worshipping center and their supporting person, without considering the fact that these idols can be of no profit or loss even for themselves.

The verse says:

“…(Then) say: ‘Why is it that you have taken guardians other than Him who own no profit and loss for themselves?’…”

Then, by providing two explicit and clear examples, the Qur’an differentiates between the position of the individuals who are ‘monotheist’ and that of ‘pagans’, stating:

“…Say: ‘Are the blind and the eyed equal?…”

As the blind and the eyed people are not similar, therefore, the pagan and the faithful are not alike either, and one cannot designate the position of the idols alongside Allah.

The other point the verse remarks is that:

“…Or are the darknesses and light identical?…”

How would it be possible to align the idols, which are utter darkness, alongside Allah (s.w.t.) Who is the absolute light of existence?

Then, the Qur’an stresses further the rejection of the ideas of the pagans, asking whether they have aligned counterparts for Allah for the sake that they are engaged in the process of creation like Allah, and hence, such a creation has brought about for them a state of confusion.

The verse says:

“…Or have they set up partners for Allah who have created (something) like His creation, so that creation is all alike to them?’…”

However, even the idol worshippers are not of the same opinion about idols. They, too, regard Allah as the Creator of everything and consider the world of creation as a whole package in His Authority.

Therefore, the verse instantly adds:

“…Say: ‘Allah is the Creator of everything, and He is the One, the All-Dominant’.”

One can infer from the above verse that the process of creation is a continuous matter and Allah (s.w.t.) is continuously shedding rays of existence, in which case, every being is benefiting existence from His Pure Essence from moment to moment.

Therefore, the process of creation and administration of the world of existence are both in His Own Power, just like the onset of creation.

Explanations

Discussing issues in the form of ‘question-and-answer’ is one of the methods of propagation, and dissemination of information, and is an educational means, which has been notably used by the Qur’an.

“Say: ‘Who is the Lord of heavens and the earth?’…”

Some pagans only accepted the creative nature of Allah and considered others as administrators.

Therefore, in Surah ‘Ankabūt, No. 29, verse 61, the Qur’an proclaims:

“And if you ask them** (**these pagans**) **who created the heavens and the earth and made the sun and the moon subservient, they will certainly say ‘Allah’…”

Then how is it that they hasten to paganism, ‘Deism’, and ignorance after making such a confession?

Paganism in all its forms, according to some Islamic quotations, is more hidden and covert than the movement of an ant over a dark stone by night. An example of this is that one might say that this task was done under Allah’s blessings and with the help of such a person.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 17

أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَداً رَابِياً وَمِمّا يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَآءَ حِلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِثْلُهُ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَاطِلَ فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَآءً وَأَمَّا مَا يَنفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الأَرْضِ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الأَمْثَالَ

17. “He sent down water from the sky, then rivers flew according to their capacity and the floodwater carried along a swelling foam, and from metals, which they melt with fire so as to make an ornament or goods, arises a foam similar to it. Thus does Allah illustrate the Truth and falsehood; then as for the foam passes away as a worthless thing, and what is beneficial for people remains on the earth. Thus Allah sets forth the parables.”

As the method of the Qur’an relies heavily on objective issues as an educational book, in order to

explain the complicated concepts, it points to the tangible examples which are interesting and beautiful in everyday life of the people.

It explains an explicit example for visualization of the facts referred to in the previous verses regarding monotheism, paganism, faith and blasphemy, the truth and the untruth.

At first the Qur'an says:

"He sent down water from the sky..."

It is the kind of water which is life-giving and creating, and it is also the source of development and movement. There are floodwaters which flow from every valley and every river, measured according to their capacity.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...then rivers flew according to their capacity..."

Small streams join one another, stream-lining into canals that join together to form huge torrents which flow down the mountains. Waters piling up carry whatever stand in their way, which strike over them. At this moment, foams emerge from between the layers of the wares.

As the Qur'an says:

"...and the floodwater carried along a swelling foam..."

The emergence of the foams is not confined to the coming of rain. There arises a foam out of what is being melted in the furnaces for obtaining jewelry or home appliances, upon which they light fire to melt, so there are also foams appearing which are like the ones on water surface.

The Qur'an says:

"...and from metals, which they melt with fire so as to make an ornament or goods, arises a foam similar to it..."

After giving this example, the Holy Qur'an concludes by pointing out that Allah provides you with an example in this manner for the truth and the untruth.

The verse says:

"...Thus does Allah illustrate the Truth and falsehood..."

Afterwards, discussing it in detail, it declares, however, the seeming high foams, which are void in the process of flow of water, go away and the water, which is useful for people, stays on the earth.

The verse says:

"…then as for the foam passes away as a worthless thing, and what is beneficial for people remains on the earth…"

The truth is also always useful, just like pure water which is the source of life. However, the wrong and the untruth is useless and absurd, while the truth must always be flourishing and alive so as to expel the 'untruth'.

At the end of the verse, to stress further the point and to call all to study in depth and in a more exact way over this example, as well as other examples of the Qur'an, it says:

"…Thus Allah sets forth the parables."

Examples usually universalize cases. There are many scientific discussions which are only understandable for a selected few persons and the masses of people do not benefit from them very much. However, once they are accompanied with examples, they tend to become better understandable for the people of all echelons and all levels of knowledge.

Therefore, examples are best as a means of generalization of knowledge and culture, and they have some undeniable and numerous applications.

There are two examples introducing the falsehood in this verse. One is the foam which appears on the surface of water. The second is the foam which covers metals once they are in the melting pot.

The falsehood is like the foam for:

It is transient.

It appears as the shadow of the truth and under it.

It covers up the truth.

It has got looks but is worthless. It does neither quench the thirst of anyone, nor does any plant grow as a result of it.

It disappears once the conditions are normal.

It places itself on top though it is void and without any substance.

Illustration

Illustration makes rational problems tangible and paves the way for arriving at the objectives. It universalizes all subjects and tends to silence the obstinate. Therefore, the Qur'an has utilized this method extensively. Allah has provided three examples in this verse.

First, He has exemplified the revelation of the Qur'an to the water which is descended from the sky. He has also compared the hearts of the people to the oases which attract the water to themselves according to their own capacity.

Those who make their utmost effort to understand the Qur'an will reap great rewards, like rivers and oases which are big; and those who are content with the Qur'an and make less effort in understanding its facts will reap less and take less advantages just like smaller oases and streams which obtain less shares.

Later, Allah compares the satanically whims and temptations to foam which appears on water surface. It goes without saying that the main cause of the foam is not water itself, but it is the land which does not have good soil.

Also, skepticisms and doubts as well as selfish whims do not have their origin in the truth, but they have their source in the people's selves. Allah, the Almighty, proclaims that as foam does not last long and what remains of it is pure and soft water, satanical whims will ultimately disappear and vanish while the real face of the truth reveals itself and remains forever.

The third example is that He (s.w.t.) has compared paganism to those nasty materials which are dark in colour and exemplified as such which melt while they are placed on metals and the simile goes on in the case of faith which is exemplified to a melted piece of metal which is pure.

And thus end the proverbs of the Qur'an here which are so instructive.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 18

لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَي وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُم مَّا فِي الأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لاَفْتَدَوْا بِهِ أُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ

18. "For those** (**people**) **who accepted their Lord, it is the best** (**reward**)**. But those who did not accept Him, even if they were to have all that is on the earth and the like of it, they would certainly offer it as ransom. It is they for whom the reckoning will be terrible and their abode will be Hell and what an awful place it is!"

One can infer from the Holy Qur'an that there are several accounts kept for people on the Day of Judgment.

Some have an easy account.

"...by an easy reckoning"[14]

Some have their account inspected audited and settled in a hard and an exact way.

"...a severe account..."[15]

Some go to hell and there is no need for any settlement by court or trials.

"...and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight for them."[16]

Some go to the Paradise without having to settle any accounts.

"...only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure."[17]

According to the Islamic quotations and traditions, those who are forgiving and merciful towards people and treat them with favor, will have an easy time as far as their account is concerned; and those who are hard on others, their account will be hard to settle.

The unbelievers will go to Hell with no account, and those believers who are patient will go to Paradise without any worries for their settlement of account.

As the Qur'an confirms, acceptance is mutual. That is, if the people expect Allah to accept their call, they must also accept Allah's call.

"...Answer Allah and the Messenger when he invites you to that which gives you life..."[18]

A Discussion About the Call

The issue of the invitation can be dealt with from different dimensions:

Those Who Invite to the Truth

A: Prophets:

"Say: '... I call to Allah..."[19]

Allah commands the Prophet (S) to tell the people that his way of life and that of his followers is this which leads and directs people towards Allah with insight.

"Remember when you were climbing (the hillside) and you paid no heed to any one, while the Messenger was calling you from your rear..."[20]

"And as one inviting to Allah by His leave, and as a light-giving torch."[21]

Meaning that you call on people directing them towards Allah with His permission, thus becoming the burning torch of the world.

B: The Believers:

"And there should be a party among you who invite (***others***) ***to good..."***[22]

This means that from among you Muslims, those who are more knowledgeable and more virtuous must lead the people towards the good and righteousness.

C: Jinn:

"O' our people accept the caller of Allah (***just as we did***)***..."***[23]

The Callers to Falsehood

Pioneers of paganism:

"And We made them the pioneers (***who***) ***call to the Fire..."***[24]

The Satan:

"...the Satan calls them to the chastisement..."[25]

That is: would they still follow the Satan's lead to hell regardless of the fact that he has called their fathers to Hell?

and:

"I did not have any authority over you, except that I called you and you responded me..."[26]

The Unbelievers:

"...those invite to the Fire..."[27]

That is the pagans call you to hell fire by way of ignorance and darkness.

The Subject of Invitation

Life:

"...he invites you to that which gives you life..."[28]

This verse means that Allah and your prophet call you to accept the faith so as to enable you to reach an eternal life.

The Straight path:

"And certainly you invite them to a straight path."[29]

Forgiveness:

“...Allah invites to Paradise and forgiveness...”[30]

The Paradise:

“And Allah does call mankind to the Abode of Peace...”[31]

Salvation:

“I call you to the salvation...”[32]

Confronting the Dissidents

Accusations

Sorcerer:

“...Verily this indeed is a knowing sorcerer.”[33]

A poet:

“...nay! he is a poet...”[34]

Soothsayer:

“...for by the grace of your Lord, you are not a soothsayer...”[35]

In this verse the Prophet (S) is commanded to mention unto people that he speaks while he is blessed by revelation and prophecy from his Lord and there is no question of lunacy existing in him.

Crazy:

“...And they say: “Verily he is crazy.”[36]

Liar:

“...verily we do think you to be of the liars.”[37]

We guess you are from among the liars.

Oppressor:

“...who desires that he may have superiority over you...”[38]

This verse is about the people of Noah who, answering him, said to others that this person wants to achieve supremacy over you.

Threat:

“…we would certainly stone you…”[39]

Slaying:

“…And (remember) when those who disbelieved plotted against you to take you captive, or to kill you…”[40]

Humiliation:

“…Is this he who speaks of your gods?…”[41]

Skepticism:

Leaders and chieftains of the people of Salih, ridiculing the poor who became believers, said:

“Do you believe that Salih is sent by his Lord?…”[42]

Conspiracy and war:

“And (remember) when those who disbelieved plotted against you to take you captive, or to kill you, or to expel you…”[43]

The Motives and Factors for Lack of Acceptance

Imitation

Fanaticism

Arrogance

Sensual desire:

“But if they do not answer you, then know that they only follow their low desires…”[44]

The Reward for Acceptance

Reward:

“Then, as for those who believe and do righteous deeds, He will pay them their rewards fully and will bestow them out of His Grace…”[45]

Life:

“O’ you who have Faith! Answer Allah and the Messenger when he invites you to that which gives you life…”[46]

Happiness:

"For those who respond to their Lord is the best (reward)..."[47]

Any way, after depicting the profile of the 'truth' and the 'untruth' through an expressive example mentioned in the previous verse, here the Qur'an alludes to the fate of those who have accepted Allah's call and at the same time, it refers to the destiny of the ones who rejected the truth and turned to vices.

At first, it says:

"For those people who accepted their Lord, it is the best (reward)..."

Then the Qur'an further adds that as for those who do not accept this call of Allah (s.w.t.), their destiny is so wicked and relentless that even if they were in full possession of all of what is found on the earth or the like of it, they would be ready to dispense with them all so as to attain salvation.

However, all this would not be accepted from them.

The verse says:

"...But those who did not accept Him, even if they were to have all that is on the earth and the like of it, they would certainly offer it as ransom..."

To portray the grievousness of their punishment, there would be no interpretation more explicit than the one which assumes that supposedly one owns all of what is on the earth, rather doubling that amount, and dispenses all just to be relieved and receive salvation, yet it is of no vail.

This sentence refers, in fact, to one's ultimate desire that he wants to be the proprietor of all that exists on the earth. However, the intensity of the punishment of the oppressors and dissidents of the Allah's call is so much so that they are ready to sacrifice this ultimate worldly desire, and beyond it, and become relieved.

Following this catastrophe, abstention from accepting all that is on the earth for one's salvation, is an allusion made to their other misfortune which implies that they have got a hard and an awful account to settle, and ultimately, they will be located in the fire of the inferno.

The verse says:

"...It is they for whom the reckoning will be terrible and their abode will be Hell and what an awful place it is!"

1. Tafsir-i-Burhan.
2. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 116
4. Ar-Rahman, No. 55, verse 6

5. Fussilat, No. 41, verse 11
6. An-N□r, No. 24, verse 41
7. Surah 'Isr a', No. 17, verse 44
8. The verse under discussion
9. Surah 'Isr a', No. 17, verse 44
10. Durr-ul-Manth□r
11. Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 71
12. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 186
13. Surah Fatir, No. 35, verse 14
14. Surah Al-'Inshiqaq, No. 84, verse 8
15. Surah At-Tal aq, No. 65, verse 8
16. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 105
17. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 16
18. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 24
19. Surah Y□suf, No. 12, verse 108
20. Surah ‘Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 153
21. Surah Al-Ahzab, No. 33, verse 46
22. ‘Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 104
23. Surah Al-'Ahqaf, No. 46, verse 31
24. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 41
25. Surah Luqman, No. 31, verse 21
26. Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 22
27. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 221
28. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 24
29. Surah Al-Mu'min□n, No. 23, verse 73
30. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 221
31. Surah Y□nus, No. 10, verse 25
32. Surah Al-Ghafir, No. 40, verse 41
33. Surah ‘A‘raf, No. 7, verse 109
34. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 5
35. Surah At-T□r, No. 52, verse 29
36. Surah Al-Qalam, No. 68, verse 51
37. Surah Al-'A‘raf, No. 7, verse 66
38. Surah Al-Mu'min□n, No. 23, verse 24
39. Surah H□d, No. 11, verse 21
40. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 30
41. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 36
42. Surah Al-'A‘raf, No. 7, verse 75
43. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 30
44. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 50
45. Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 173
46. Surah Al-Anfal, No. 8, verse 24
47. Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 18

Section 3: The Faithful and the Unfaithful Compared

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 19

أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَآ اُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبّـِكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَي إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ اُولُوا الاَلْبَابِ

19. "Is he who knows that what is revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, like the one who is blind? Indeed, only the possessors of intellects take admonition,"

The Possessors of Intellect

We have picture and profile of the details of the programs of the proponents of the truth depicted in this verse which supplements the discussion of the previous verses. In the first instance, He poses the issue in a positive interrogation with negative sense, saying:

"Is he who knows that what is revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, like the one who is blind?..."

This type of interpretation is a delicate reference to the fact that the lack of knowledge of this reality is utterly impossible unless one's deep insight has been entirely blocked.

Therefore, the Qur'an, towards the end of the verse adds:

"...Indeed, only the possessors of intellects take admonition,"

Anyway, we have allusions made to those who have accepted the life-giving call of the prophets (as) in the previous verse, while the impact of the acceptance of that call is being stated in this verse and in the following verses.

Everyone of: human nature, reason, and knowledge has got a core in one's brain which may be dismantled as a result of habits, customs, superstitions, and instincts. Therefore, man must be constantly concentrating on that central nucleus and core.[1]

The Wise in the Qur'an

The Arabic term /'ulul-'alb ab/ has been mentioned in the Qur'an 16 times, every one of which has been stated accompanied with one accomplishment or an attribution, among them, we note:

They understand the secret of commandments:

"And in (the law of) retaliation there is (saving of life for you, O' possessors of intellects..." 2

They are future-oriented:

"...and make provision, but surely the best provision is the piety. So, have awe of Me, O' possessors of intellect!" 3

They regard the world as a passing stage and not a destination and residence point.

The possessors of intellect are those who:

"...mediate on the creation of the heavens and the earth, seriously saying): 'Our Lord! You have not created (all) thin in vain!..." 4

They receive instructive lessons from history:

"Indeed in their stories there is a lesson for the possessors of intellect..." 5

They accept the best and the most superior logic of all:

"Those who listen to the saying, then follow the best of it..." 6

They are of the worshipping and struggling lot who perform the night prayer:

"Is he who is obedient during hours of the night ... only the possessors of intellect are mindful." 7

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 20

الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَلا يَنقُضُونَ الْمِيثَاقَ

20. "Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah and do not break the pledge."

The Arabic phrase /'ahdillah/ includes both the innate and inherent promises such as 'love unto the Truth and justice', and rational promises like the comprehension of the facts of the world of existence including the issues of 'the origin and the end'.

They also refer to both the religious promises such as practicing all the required acts and rituals and abstention from all that is prohibited, and the commitments of promises which men keep with regard to one another and Allah has made their observation required.

According to the statements of some commentators,8 one of the most important Divine covenants is the Imamate, 'leadership', of the celestial leaders. After that Hadrat 'Ibrahim (as) attained accession to the

position of Imamate following numerous tests and trials, he requested Allah to enable his progeny to achieve that rank.

Instead of saying that the position of Imamate would not be bestowed on the cruel people, and to clarify the importance of this position, He said:

"My covenant does not include the unjust." 9,

which itself is an evidence for the importance of the position and magnitude of Imamate.

Incidentally, the Arabic term /mi aq/ 'testament' refers to what is the source of confidence between one's heart and that thing. As the existence of a Divine leader provides comfort for men's heart and soul, therefore, this matter has been regarded as one of the examples of 'testament'.

Anyway, keeping one's promise, like respect for one's parents, and returning of the deposits, is not confined to the Islamic jurisprudence. On the other hand, it is included in human rights as well. Thus every wise and rational man must observe it.

In conclusion, religious testament is the kind of the commitment which the Prophet (S) has secured from the believing people so as to obey him and abstain from committing sins and overlooking the religious commandments and prohibitions.

Incidentally the reason why the term 'testament' or 'pledge' is repeated after the word 'covenant' is that none imagines that the objective is only the Divine promise and that of the people for all the commandments and the prohibitions are included in the meaning of 'covenant'.

It is for this reason that He informs us that the testament and covenant of the Prophet (S) and the people is as vigorously to be observed as that of Allah (s.w.t.) and the people.

The verse says:

"Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah and do not break the pledge."

Some commentators, however, believe that the aim of this repetition is merely emphasis.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 21

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ

21. "And those who join what Allah has commanded to be joined and they fear their Lord and dread the terrible reckoning."

Some Islamic quotations indicate that what Allah has ordained to be joined together is union of kindred.

That is, conservation of family ties as well as the ideological ties which implies continuous and profound ties with the heavenly leaders and the following of the line of 'Wilayat' (leadership).[10]

The verse says:

"And those who join what Allah has commanded to be joined and they fear their Lord and dread the terrible reckoning."

A simple and in-passing glance at our contemporary world will reveal that despite having utmost and the best capital, i.e., oil, beneath their feet, and enjoying, in front of them, the common point of unity and love of over one Billion Muslims, that is Ka'bah, and despite benefiting from the best of schools and logic, some Muslims are constantly under all kinds of pressure from the super-powers for their lack of connection with the Divine leadership.

It is for this reason that in the verse 27 of Surah Al-Baqarah, after the sentence:

"...and cut asunder what Allah has commanded to be joined..."[11]

there has been mentioned:

"...and they make corruption on the Earth...",

for it goes without saying that the mere cutting off ties of relationship does not by itself cause corruption on the earth. On the contrary, it is giving up of the Divine leadership which leads to the entanglement in the confinement of the despots and spreading of corruption.

Note the Following Points

Union of Kindred: strengthening blood-kinship is not merely confined to the family visits and meetings. Provision of financial assistance also is one of the aspects of union of kindred.

Imam Sadiq (as) proclaims that in addition to Zakat (alms), there are also other dues to be paid and which are necessary. Then he recited this verse.[12]

The objective in mind of the Imam (as) probably has been 'Khoms' (one fifth) when mentioning other dues.

As for the importance of 'union of kindred', it is sufficient to be noted that Allah has made mention of it next to His name.

"...And be in awe of Allah through Whom you demand one of another, as well as any ties of kinship..."[13]

The meaning of 'relatives' is not confined to one's family genealogical relatives, but, it refers to the great

Muslim community in which all individuals of the nation are considered as brothers, where the Qur'an says:

"The believers are but brethren..."[14]

Their father is the Prophet of Islam (S) as well as Hadrat Ali (as). The Prophet (S) has remarked:

"Ali and I are to be regarded as fathers of this community."

Imam Sadiq (as), while on deathbed, ordered to hand on some gifts to those relatives who had been rude to him. When he was criticized for this act, he recited the above verse; and so did he teach us that the condition for union of kindred would not be their optimism, love and relationship with us.

To explain the Qur'anic phrases: 'they fear their Lord' and 'dread the terrible reckoning', one must say that though the Arabic words /xašiyat/ (fear) and /xauf/ (dread) have sometimes been used interchangeably and as synonyms, meaning one thing in mind, they are in fact different in an Arabic context.

The word /xašiyat/ refers to that kind of fear and impression which is left on someone as a result of respect he bears for a person. However, the term /xauf/ refers to a wider range of meaning and includes all kinds of fear and anxiety.

In other words, the term /xašiyat/ is never used for a damaging accident and one does not refer to cold and disease as having /xašiyat/ with respect to them, while the application of the word to /xauf/ holds in cases of cold, heat, disease and is prevalent.

Ultimately, since /xašiyat/ is based on one's knowledge as to the respect, magnitude and importance of the other person, one can say /xašiyat/ is peculiar to the learned men and /xauf/ is generally applicable for all.

As the Qur'an says:

"...those of His servants only who are knowledgeable fear Allah..."[15]

A Few Quotations on Union of Kindred

Jabir quoting Imam Baqir (as) said that the Prophet (S) said:

"Kindness towards one's parents and union of kindred facilitates one's settlement of his accounts."

Then, he (S) recited this very verse.[16]

The Messenger of Allah (S) remarked:

"He who cuts off his relationship with his kindred, will not enter Paradise."[17]

Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) said:

“Cutting off of one’s relationship with the relatives leads to poverty.”[18]

Imam Sadiq (as) remarked:

“He who is disobedient with respect to his parents and he who cuts off his relationship with his relatives can never sense the smell and the flavor of Paradise” [19]

Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) said:

“Cutting off one’s relationship with his relatives, spoils all of (one’s) blessings.”[20]

A man, addressing the Prophet (S), asked:

“Which deed is considered as conducive to the utmost outrage before Allah?”

He answered:

“Attributing partners to Allah.”

Then he asked:

“Which action comes next?”

He answered:

“Cutting off one’s relationship with his relatives?”

Then he asked:

“Which action comes next?”

He answered:

“Bidding to indecency and forbidding right conduct.”[21]

Surah Ar-Ra‘d - Verse 22

وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرّاً وَعَلاَنِيَةً وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ أُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَي الدَّارِ

22. “And those who patiently persevere, seeking the countenance of their Lord, and establish prayer, and spend of what We have provided them, secretly and openly, and they avert evil with

good; theirs shall be the Ultimate abode”

And those who usually keep their patience in performing the commandments of Allah and do not lose their integrity in face of the diseases and evil consequences and abstain themselves from committing Allah’s sins, and by keeping their patience, they mean to obtain rewards from Allah, the Almighty, because ‘seeking the countenance of Allah’ signifies ‘asking for Allah’ which in turn means asking for Allah’s reward.

Once, in the Arabic language, Arabs want to glorify something, they say ‘its countenance’ and ‘its self’, and by ‘the countenance of Allah’ they mean the Glorious Essence of the Almighty. Nothing is greater than Allah and nothing is His counterpart. Some say that: the purpose of ‘countenance’ in here is reference made as to sincerity and repelling of bigotry and hypocrisy.

The verse says:

“And those who patiently persevere, seeking the countenance of their Lord…”

Then the verse continues explaining the qualities of the possessors of intellect by adding that they perform the prayer with keeping all its limits. In other words, they are always serious in performing their prayer rituals, and they share with others whatever Allah has bestowed on them whether be it in secret or openly. And through their obedience, they repel all sins.

The verse says:

“…and establish prayer, and spend of what We have provided them, secretly and openly, and they avert evil with good…”

Ibn–i–Abb as, regarding the last quality, has said that through the mean of decent and allowed action, they repel the indecent behavior.

It is quoted from the highly esteemed Prophet of Islam (S) who has told Ma‘ az–ibn–Jabal that:

Whenever he did an evil act, then he would perform an admirable deed so as to wipe it out.

Some commentators say one must be kind to those who have bad treatment to them and he would not try to retaliate it.

Some other commentators have claimed that the purpose is that once they are deprived, they go on giving away and once they are oppressed, they forgive; and when they are isolated, they try to establish relationships once more. Ibn–i–Kisan says: it means that they try to remove the penalty for their sins by repentance.

The ending sentence of the verse says:

“...Theirs shall be the Ultimate abode.”

It means that those whom We depicted their profiles of, will receive their reward of Paradise. In this holy sentence the objective meaning of /ad–dar/ is ‘Paradise’ and that of /‘uqba/ is ‘reward’ which refers to the happy ending.

Explanations

‘Patience’ does not merely signify tolerating difficulties; rather, it mostly includes perseverance in worshipping, restraining from sins, toleration in case of calamities, submission in case of obedience, and lack of arrogance in case of affluence.

The Qur’anic phrase ‘the countenance of their Lord’ signifies attracting the attention, favour, and satisfaction of Allah.

Performing prayer is one of the examples of the Divine covenants, which was discussed in the previous verses. Some Islamic traditions also refer to it, saying:

“Prayer is the covenant of Allah.”

Patience and prayers are two channels of communication with Allah, and charity and good acts are two channels of communication with people.

Giving in charity of one’s wealth has got a hierarchy:

Step one:

Sharing of the things Allah has bestowed upon us.

“...spend (in alms) of that which We have provided for you...”[22]

Step two:

Giving in charity out of one’s earnings through allowed business.

“O you who have faith! Spend (in charity) of the good things that you have earned...”[23]

Step three:

Giving away of what one likes most.

“You will never attain righteousness unless you spend out of what you love...”[24]

Step four:

Self–sacrifice:

“...and prefer (*them*) *before themselves though poverty may afflict them...”*[25]

According to Al-Mizan, the Arabic term /‘uqbadd ar/ signifies happy ending in the world, though it may be considered as including both, this world and the Hereafter.

The meaning of returning the good in exchange for evil is that: if from among the faithful someone commits an evil act in connection with us, We ought to overlook it.

But we must not have the same pattern of action with the tyrants and the corrupt, for, concerning them, they must be paid in their own coins. Anyway, though Islam is a religion of ethics, compassion and forgiveness, it has also the following instruction in its place.

The Holy Qur’an says:

“(As for) the fornicatress and the fornicator, flog each of them, (giving) a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them detain you in the matter of obedience to Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day...”[26]

Islam is a comprehensive religion, and ‘the possessors of intellect’ are some perfect persons.

The existence of such Qur’anic words concerning them as: /y□f□n/, /yaxšaun/, /yax af□n/, /sabar□/, /’aq am□/, /’anfiq□/, and /yadra’□n/ are signs to show that the perfect men not only are undertaking their promises, but also preserve all their proper communications, and they enjoy a superior state of virtuosity and they stay on the whole scenes of truth actively instead of creeping into isolation.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 23

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلآئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِن كُلِّ بَابٍ

23. “Gardens of Eternity, they shall enter therein and also the righteous from among their fathers, their spouses, and their children, and unto whom the angels will enter from every gate’.”

Out of 137 times that the Qur’anic words /jann at/ and /jannat/ have been repeated in the glorious Qur’an, only 12 times they have been mentioned under /jann atu ‘adnin/. According to a tradition from ‘Durr-ul-Manth□r’, it signifies ‘a special paradise’.[27]

The blissful Prophet (S) remarks:

“Whoever wants his life and death to be like those of mine, and enters the Gardens of Eden which is my Paradise, must designate Ali-Ibn-Abi-Talib (*as*) *and his Immaculate successors from among his descendents as his leaders and his Imam, who are most supreme in knowledge and wisdom over all human beings and they are guides for people towards right path.”*[28]

In the meantime, we have it in the Qur'an repeatedly that the righteous people of a family will also be nigh to each other when in Paradise and will be able to enjoy each other's company therein as they associate with each other.

Certainly, the mention of the titles of some individuals of the family like father, wife, and child in the above noble verse, does not specify any particular point, and it covers all the righteous members of the family, including the above mentioned ones, and as well as mothers, sisters and brothers, too.

Incidentally, perhaps the reason for the absence of the name 'mother' here is that the mother is the wife of one's father and is covered by the word of /'azwaj/ (spouses) as is the case with brothers and sisters who are regarded as paternal descendents, and uncles and aunts are considered as the descendents of one's ancestors.

Anyway, whatever of the conclusion we obtain from the Divine verses is that the angels, under all circumstances, whether in this world or in the world hereafter (purgatory or resurrection day), are in contact with man. They sometimes send him greetings

"...sends His greeting on you, and (so do) His angels..."[29]

while on other occasions, they ask forgiveness for him:

"...and ask forgiveness for those who believe..."[30]

That is, the angels who carry the magnanimous heavens on top of their shoulders and those who are engaged in thanking and in worshipping are both faithful believers and ask for forgiveness for the faithful from Allah.

At other times, they utter invocation for him, saying:

"Our Lord! and make them enter the Gardens of Perpetuity..."[31]

That is, O' Allah! Give them all along with their parents, wives, and children access and abode in the Paradise of Eden. At the time of death and at the onset of the purgatory, the angels let them voice with the slogan chanting

"...'Fear not, nor be grieved..."[32]

And they take their lives with the sentence 'Greetings to you'.

The Qur'an says:

"Those whom the angels cause to die in a good state, saying: 'Peace be on you..."[33]

That is, those who, like angels, 'the agents of Allah's blessings', take their souls, address them saying

that due to your good deeds performed in the world, you will thus enter the Eternal Paradise, and they would also go on greeting them from every corner.

The verse says:

"Gardens of Eternity, they shall enter therein and also the righteous from among their fathers, their spouses, and their children, and unto whom the angels will enter from every gate'."

Explanations

There are eight gateways mentioned for Paradise which correspond to the number of traits already mentioned for 'the possessors of intellect' counted in recent verses. Probably, each of the eight traits and characteristics leads man through one of the gateways of Paradise and is a leading path towards the eternal happiness for man.

Not every father and child, and every husband and wife, every descendent whether paternal or maternal will join one another in Paradise or will be placed side-by-side there, for in the Day of Resurrection, the relatives by blood and those kin by marriage, as a means, will be of no use.

On that Day, every body will be held responsible for his own self, in which case nothing, except one's own efforts and struggle, will have any effect:

Therefore, the entrance of some relatives, unto some others into Paradise, is only because of their competence and individual qualification.

A Paradise-deserving family is a family among whom there is sincerity and unity in pursuance of the path of the Truth, because the condition for entering Paradise is righteousness.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 24

سَلامٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

24. "Peace (***be***) ***upon you*** (***saying***) ***that you persevered in patience!*** (***And now***) ***how excellent is the Ultimate Abode."***

One of the unique advantages of the Qur'an is that it states the most meaningful matters in the most concise terms, among which reference may be made to the sentence '***Peace be upon you***' which is a very concise yet very meaningful sentence. Its historical perspective goes back to the previous prophets like 'Ibrahim, Noah, and Adam (as)

"Peace be upon Noah among the nations."[34]

The Qur'anic term // (Peace) is one of Allah's names, and it is one of the ways of greetings of Allah to the prophets, the Divine congratulations on the people of Paradise, the whisper of the angles; the international saying of all the Muslims; the slogan of all the paradise-deserving in this world and in the other one; the common words of the Creator and the created; the voice heard on arrival and departure, and the beginning of every speech and of every letter which is said to both the living and the dead, and on the aged and the young.

Answering and returning it, however, is obligatory for a believer.

The message of /salam/ (peace) is a message of respect, congratulations, prayer and greetings from Allah.

"Peace; a word from a Merciful Lord."[35]

When we utter at the end of each of our prayers:

"Greetings 'peace' to us and to the righteous servants of Allah",

with this greeting /salam/ all the dividing lines in the realm of race, absurd privileges of senility, sexuality, property, position, language, and time will be obliterated and we can establish communications with all the righteous people to whom we send our greetings.

Some Islamic quotations denote that some people go to Paradise without having settled their accounts.

When the angels ask the reason, they will be answered:

"We used to keep waiting for obedience of Allah and used to keep our patience while we were struck by disasters and why suffering from difficulties."

By hearing this answer, the angels will welcome them by saying /salamun 'alykum/ (peace be on you). [36]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"We are among those who keep their patience though our Shi'ite followers are more patient than us, for our patience is upon what we know, but they are keeping their patience as to what they do not know." [37]

Points Concerning Patience

We must regard Allah as the source of all patience:

"...and your patience is not but by Allah..."[38]

We must consider the Divine consent as the main purpose and objective of our patience, not for the sake of fame or anything else:

"And for the sake of your Lord, be patient."[39]

Patience is one of the traits of the prophets and the key to Paradise:

"Or did you suppose you would enter Paradise untouched..."[40]

Patience, when kept in the face of the calamities and the Divine trials is the criterion for cognition of the true profile of those who are patient:

"And most certainly We will try you until We have known those among you who exert themselves hard, and the patient..."[41]

Patience leads one to receive Allah's blessings:

"Those are they on whom are blessings and Mercy from their Lord..."[42]

Perhaps one of the reasons for sending greetings to the Prophet (S) and his Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) is that they were among the most patient of the people.

Patience with regard to faith is just like the head as for the body.

The Prophet (S) remarks:

"Patience is a part of Faith, just like the head and the body."[43]

Patience categorizes the hierarchy of those who deserve Paradise:

"These shall be rewarded with high places because they were patient..."[44]

"And He will reward them for their patience, with a garden and clothes of silk (in Heaven)."[45]

Patience has got a hierarchy; and we read in an Islamic tradition that patience in case of calamities has got 300 degrees; in case of religious worship has got 600 degrees, and with regard to restraining from sins has got 900 degrees.[46]

Throughout the Qur'an, one finds that only the reward for those who are patient is so vast and is indefinitely unlimited:

"...only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure."[47]

Alongside patience, the glorious Qur'an has also dealt with the issue of gratitude as well. It also alludes to the fact that difficulties also constitute blessings:

"...for every patient, grateful one."[48]

'Patience' is involved in the will of Imam Hussayn (as) passed down to his son, Hadrat Sajjad (as):

“O my son! Be patient with the Truth even if it is bitter!”[49]

Sometimes, there are several kinds of patience observed in one occasion; as in the case of Hadrat ‘Ibrahim (as) in sacrificing Ishmael, in which case, patience with regard to obedience and submission to the will of Allah, as well as patience with regard to the calamity are involved and are required.

Patience, among all, stands at the top of all perfections and virtues.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 25

وَالَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الأَرْضِ أُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ

25. “And there are those who break the covenant of Allah after its confirmation and cut asunder what Allah has commanded to be joined, and make mischief in the earth; they, theirs shall be the curse and theirs shall be the evil abode.”

In some former holy verses, the traits of the possessors of intellect were explained.

As the good and evil can well be differentiated once they are compared and juxtaposed against each other, the Qur’an recounts here some of the main traits of the ones who incite corruption and those who have lost their true sense of reasoning where it says:

“And there are those who break the covenant of Allah after its confirmation and cut asunder what Allah has commanded to be joined, and make mischief in the earth; they, theirs shall be the curse and theirs shall be the evil abode.”

In fact, all of their ideological and scientific corruptions can be summarized in the following three categories:

Breaking of the Divine testaments which includes the inherent testaments, the rational testaments, and, finally, the religious testaments.

Cutting off relationships, the relationship with Allah, the relationship with Divine religious leaders, the relationship with people, and the relationship with one’s own self.

The last part, which is the consequence of the above two, is the corruption on the earth.

Explanations

The Qur’an refers to a group who have the opposite of the attributes which characterize the good prominent traits of the possessors of intellect as in their keeping of their promise and relationships with

whatever Allah has preordained.

That is, they break their promises and cut off the relationships which have been commended to be established. Thus, there are ‘evil abodes’ designated for them instead of ‘Ultimate abodes’.

Corruption on the Earth: There are actions dealt with in the Qur’an which are attributed to individuals, among which the Pharaoh has been noted as an example of those who incite corruption.

The Qur’an concerning him says:

“…Verily he was one of the mischief-makers.”[50]

Actions like homicide, destruction of tillage and generation, inciting and provoking differences, and murder are also among the corruption cases on the earth. [51]

The Qur’an considers ‘execution’ or amputation for punishing of the ‘corrupt ones on the earth’. And as for those who have ambitions in their thinking for corruption, the Qur’an considers them as the ones who are deprived from the Divine blessings on the Day of Resurrection.

Imam Sajjad (as) writes in his will to his son:

“Abstain from association and avoid the company of those who cut off their relationship with their relatives, for I have found them cursed in the Qur’an”. [52]

Messages

The separation of man from Allah is the turning point in the onset of deviations.

Cutting off of the relationship with one’s kinds is one of the capital sins, for Allah (s.w.t.) has vowed as to their punishment.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 26

اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الأَخِرَةِ إِلاَّ مَتَاعٌ

26. “Allah enlarges the sustenance for whomever he pleases and straitens (it for whomever He wishes) and they rejoice in the life of the world, while the life of the world beside the Hereafter is naught but a temporary enjoyment.”

The amplification and the straitening of one’s means of subsistence has been attributed to Allah in this verse, but it goes without saying that the acts of Allah, the Wise, are planned according to pragmatism and are philosophical, as some of its reasons can be seen explained in some verses of the Qur’an and

in the Islamic quotations.

For instance, committing sin causes changes in the life and means of subsistence of many individuals.

We read in the supplication of Kumayl that:

"O' Allah: Forgive those sins of mine which change the course of the blessings which you have bestowed upon me."

At times, the differences, which exist in one's means of subsistence, are because of the trial of these individuals.

'Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 155' says:

"And We will surely test you** (**all**) **with something of fear and hanger and loss of property, lives and fruits; but give glad tidings to the** (**stead fast**) **patient."

At times, being deprived is due to the deprivation which is inflicted on other people from their rights, like the garden which burned under fire, which Surah Al-Qalam No. 68 has made allusion to. At other times, lack of concentration on the circumstances of orphans results in straitening of one's means of subsistence.

"Nay! But you honour not the orphans."[53]

What is important is the fact that we must not feel rude and arrogant once our means of subsistence is amplified, forgetting everything; nor must we become desperate of everything when our means of subsistence is at stake, for the Divine system is one which is based on His Wisdom and has got trial basis, and it is not based on luck, chance and good omens.

Anyway, usually those who are affluent in their means of subsistence and are given sustenance in abundant, tend to forget it and ignore the Hereafter, sticking to the mortal world and its beauty, while this worldly life is nothing else but limited in its scope and is a mortal one as compared to the Hereafter, for the latter is immortal.

The verse says:

"Allah enlarges the sustenance for whomever he pleases and straitens** (**it for whomever He wishes**) **and they rejoice in the life of the world, while the life of the world beside the Hereafter is naught but a temporary enjoyment."

Explanations

One's means of subsistence depends on Him alone. It is not dependent upon one's shrewdness, bigotry, breaking of testaments, and cutting off of those relationships which probably require disbursing and

giving away.

Low scale for means of subsistence is also allocated according to a divine philosophical echelon which is predetermined already.

1. Tafsir-ul-Furqan
2. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 179
3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 197
4. Surah ‘Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 191
5. Surah Yūsuf, No. 12, verse 111
6. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 18
7. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 9
8. In Tafsir-us-Safi, it is quoted from Hadrat Musa-ibn-Ja‘far (as) indicating that this verse is revealed with regard to the position of the household of Muhammad (S) and their guardianship. This is the covenant of Allah.
9. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 124
10. Tafsir-us-Safi
11. (/fasiqin/ transgressors are)

“Those who break the covenant of Allah after its confirmation and cut asunder what Allah had commanded to be joined, and they make corruption on the Earth;...”

12. Tafsir-us-Safi
13. Surah An-Nisa’, No. 4, verse 1
14. Surah Al-Hujur at, No. 49, verse 10
15. Surah Fatir, No. 35, verse 28
16. Tafsir Majma‘-ul-Bayan, vol. 13, p. 54
17. Bihar, vol. 71, p. 91
18. Bihar, vol. 71, p. 91
19. Safinah, vol. 1, p. 516
20. Ghurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 4, P. 509
21. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 516
22. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 154
23. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 267
24. Surah An-Nisa, No. 4, verse 92
25. Surah Hashr, No. 53, verse 9
26. Surah An-Nūr, No. 24, verse 2
27. Tafsir-i-Forqh an
28. Tafsir Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn
29. Surah Al-’Ahz ab, No. 33, verse 43
30. Surah Ghafir, No. 40, verse 7
31. Surah Ghafir, No. 40, verse 8
32. Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 30
33. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 32
34. Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 79
35. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 58
36. Tafsir Qurtubi
37. Tafsir Safi
38. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 127
39. Surah Al-Mudathir No. 74, verse 7

40. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 214
41. Surah Muhammad, No. 47, verse 31
42. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 157
43. Bihar, vol. 9, p. 203
44. Surah Al-Furqan, No. 25, verse 75
45. Surah Insan, No. 76, verse 12
46. Bihar, vol. 71, p. 92
47. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 10
48. Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 5
49. Bihar, vol. 70, p. 184
50. Surah Qasas, No. 28, verse 4
51. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 205
52. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 74, p. 197
53. Surah Al-Fajr, No. 89, verse 17

Section 4: Remembrance of Allah Sets Hearts at Rest

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 27

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِن رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ

27. "And those who disbelieve say: 'Why has a sign not been sent down upon him from his Lord?' Say: 'Verily Allah leaves to stray whomever He wills and guides unto Himself whomever turns (to Him in repentance)'."

As there are so many topics of discussion concerning monotheism, resurrection and the mission of prophecy of the Prophet (S) included in this Surah, this verse deals once again with the Prophet of Islam's call, discussing one of the criticisms of those obstinate dissidents, saying that the pagans claim why it is that no miracle has been bestowed upon him from his Lord as they demanded.

The verse says:

"And those who disbelieve say: 'Why has a sign not been sent down upon him from his Lord?'..."

They expect that the Prophet (S) sits in isolation as an extraordinary being while each one of them calls on him and asks him to perform a miracle he must bring it on their request. No sooner they ask for the miracle than he has performed. Even, not withstanding that, they do not accept the faith if they are

willing to do so!

Responding them, the Qur'an answers that the Prophet should tell them that Allah lets whomever He wants go astray, and whoever returns to Him will be led by Him.

The verse continues saying:

"…Say: 'Verily Allah leaves to stray whomever He wills and guides unto Himself whomever turns (to Him in repentance)'."

Allusion is made to the fact that their deficiency is not a matter of miracles; rather that their deficiency is from within themselves. Their obstinacy, fanaticism, ignorance, and the sins which hinder and obstruct the road to success, cause them to disbelieve.

Anyway, every prophet must have a sign from his Lord to prove his claim of his prophetic mission, which is called 'miracle'. This miracle is naturally in some particular and identical affairs.

But those obstinate persons who did not intend to accept the truth, asked the Prophet (S) for miracles on their own request based upon their whims. Were they to stop being obstinate, the Qur'an by itself would provide them with the greatest miracle.

Sometimes, food and water is detrimental to the sick. However, this harm does not imply that there is anything wrong with the food or water. On the contrary, it is for the sake of their illness.

Certainly, those who are mentally sick, in accepting the Divine and pure verses are upset like the ones whose body is ill, for they will be provoked as soon as they are confronting the truth, and they become obstinate immediately following its presentation, then they turn away from the Truth. And this is the very meaning of /yudill/ (leaves to stray) mentioned in the verse.

A Discussion on Leading and Misleading

Divine leadership is of two kinds: the primary leadership and the supplementary leadership.

The Divine leadership concerns all mankind.

The Qur'an says:

"Verily We showed him the Way…"[1]

However, supplementary leadership only concerns those who have already accepted the former general guidance. For instance, take the case of a teacher who offers his course in an identical and monotonous way to all his students. After sometime, he tends to do more favor to those of his students who are more strenuous and hard-working.

The Qur’an says:

“And (as for) those who follow the right direction, He increases them in guidance...”[2]

And there are those who refuse to accept all the Divine verses as the Qur’an says about them.

“And there never came unto them any sign from the signs of their Lord but they turned away from it...”[3]

“And had We sent down unto you a book, written on a paper, so that they touched it with their own hands, certainly (still) the disbelievers would have said: ‘That is naught but a manifest sorcery’.”[4]

“...And (even) if they witness a miracle, they will not believe in it...”[5]

Would there be any other way of dealing with them except restraining them from favors and stamping them with the discarding seal?

Anyway, Allah is Wise and Just and He does all according to:

“...He guides whomever He pleases...”[6]

and

“...leaves to stray whomever He wills...”[7]

and

“...Allah provides with sustenance for whomever He wills...”[8]

and

“He will forgive him whom He wills”

and

“He will punish whom He wills...”[9]

and

“He creates whatever He pleases...”[10]

All the above are to be rendered into the basis of His Justice, Wisdom, Grace, and Favour.

That is, once He says:

"...He guides whomever He pleases..."

it does not imply that He leads, regardless of all criteria, whomever He wants.

As one can conclude, from other verses, on one occasion He considers 'Faith' as the condition for being led, saying:

"...and whomever believes in Allah, He guides aright his heart..."[11]

Elsewhere, securing of consent of Allah along with taking the right path are deemed necessary for being led.

It says:

"With it Allah guides whomever follows His pleasure into the ways of safety..."[12]

Or once He says:

"...He leaves to stray whomever He wills..."[13],

in another verse, He considers immoderation, hesitation and skepticism as factors for such a case of being misled.

It says:

"...Allah misleads him who is extravagant, a doubter."[14]

Anyway, if the opening of a container faces the sky the rain will enter into it, but if the opening of it faces the earth, it will not be filled with any rain and snow. So is the case with the man whose soul aspires towards material things. It is obvious that such a person will not benefit from the Divine spirituality.

The Qur'an says:

"That (Divine wrath) is because they have preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter, and definitely Allah does not guide the infidel people."[15]

Explanations

The obstinate pagans often demand new miracles every moment. The issue in question is not an outstanding miracle. Rather, it is their inherent enmity.

"...Why has a sign not been sent down upon him..."

Allah's way of treatment is concerned with leading all people:

"Verily, it is incumbent on Us to lead (them)."[16]

However, if someone took to the deviant path, Allah would ascribe to him his punishment in the form of being misled.

"...Allah leaves to stray whomever He wills...".

Submission and humility in face of Allah is the key to one's salvation and guidance

"...and guides unto Himself whomever turns (to Him in repentance)."

Leading people is up to Allah, yet His leading will be confined to those who show their preparedness already for His leadership.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 28

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلاَ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

28. "(The guided are) those who believe and their hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah. Behold! By Allah's remembrance (only) the hearts are set at rest."

Those who acknowledge the unity of Allah and accept His attributes and the prophetic mission of His Prophet (S) and embrace whatever has been revealed from Him, and their hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah, allow Allah to soothe their hearts regarding His blessings and rewards with the thought of Him, and of His grace and favors, for Allah's promise is decisive and nothing will soothe the anxious hearts better than his Divine truthful promises.

To remember Allah does not mean merely paying lip service to Him, though it is one of the clear examples of thinking of Him. For what counts is thinking of Allah in all circumstances, in particular, at the time of committing sin.

Thinking of Allah brings with it numerous blessings, including:

The remembrance of His blessings leads one to show his gratitude for Him.

The remembrance of His Power causes one of putting his trust in Him.

The remembrance of His favours serves as the source of our love for Him.

The remembrance of His Wrath and fury inspires awe of Him in us.

The remembrance of His magnitude and greatness causes one's humility and submission towards Him.

The remembrance of His Omniscience in the open and hidden serves as an impetus for our chastity.

The remembrance of His forgiveness and generosity serves as our source of hope and repentance.

The remembrance of His justice serves as an impetus for our austerity and piety.

Man is searching the extremes and he wants absolute perfection. However, as everything, except Allah, is finite and is accidental in itself, it cannot leave one's heart in rest. In contrast to those whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah, there are also some ones whose scope of mind and vision are limited and are content with so little in this world.

The prayers consist of the remembrance of Allah and are the source of one's comfort.

The Qur'an says:

"...establish prayer for My remembrance."[17]

The holy phrase:

"Behold! By Allah's remembrance (***only***) ***the hearts are set at rest."***

might mean that by Allah's remembering you, your hearts will be at peace. That is, once we know that Allah is remembering us and we are in His presence, our hearts will be at peace.

As Hadrat Noah (as) found peace of heart by means of the Divine words:

"And make you the Ark under Our eyes..."[18]

And, Imam Hussayn (as) found peace of mind while uttered it at the time of martyrdom of his son Ali Asqar, by expressing:

"It is easy over me for verily it is before Allah."

Or, it is cited in 'Arafah supplication:

"O Reminder of the reminders."

Query: This verse remarks that all minds, and that of a believer in particular, find their peace by the remembrance of Allah, but some other verses denote that whenever the faithful believer remembers Allah, his heart trembles.

Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 2 says:

"Verily believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts quake..."

Can this kind of trembling be compatible with one's peace of mind? What is the justification for that?

Answer: To imagine how the two incompatibles, that is the peace of mind and trembling of one's heart,

can be present at the same time in one person, the following examples can be leading.

Firstly: Sometimes, one has peace of mind when he has made all kinds of preparations while, at the same time, he is anxious and fears the consequences as well. The example of it is a specialized surgeon who is confident of his knowledge and job though at the time of operation of a VIP he still has his anxieties.

Secondly: the children find their peace of mind once they are with their parents, while at the same time, they fear them too.

Thirdly: Sometimes, one is happy and has his peace of mind since he knows that whatever unpleasant happens is for his trial, development and promotion. However, he is going to be anxious for not being sure whether he will succeed in his duties or not.

Fourthly: Once the believers go on reading the Qur'anic verses of punishment, Hell or of the Divine outrage, they start trembling all over. However, once they read the holy verses concerning blessings, garden of Eden and paradise, they find a sweet kind of peace of mind which brings them warm feelings.

Imam Sajjad (as) says in Abu Hamzah Supplication:

"Whenever, I remember my sins (and Your justice and Your wrath), I cry, but when I consider Your grace and Your forgiveness, I regain hope."

As an evidence for this meaning, the writer of Al-Mizan, the Late, quotes the Qur'an to be its documentation:

"...whereat do shudder the skins of those who fear their Lord, then their skins and their hearts become pliant to the remembrance of Allah..."[19]

That is, one is anxious at first though he finds peace of mind gradually.

Fifthly: He who ignores the remembrance of Allah, does not have peace of mind, in which case life becomes troublesome for him.

The Qur'an says:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance, verily for him is a life straitened..."[20]

Factors of Encourage and Peace of Mind

There may be many different causes for one's certainty and peace of mind. However, at the top of all those factors stands specifically one's awareness and knowledge.

He who is aware of the fact that his slightest piece of work will be accounted for he is hopeful on his job

properly and has peace of mind thereby.

Surah Az-Zilz al, No. 99, verse 7 says:

"So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it."

He who knows that he is created out of the Divine favor, wisdom, and blessings, he is calm and hopes for and confident of Allah's bounteousness.

The Qur'an says:

*"(**It will be said to some**) **O' you serene soul!**"*

*"**Come back to your Lord well-pleased** (**with Him**) **and well-pleasing** (**Him**)**,**"*[21]

This means that the addressing of the Beneficent comes, saying:

O' Heavenly confident and peaceful self, 'always remembering Allah'! Return, now, to your Lord as you are pleased with His eternal blessings and He is content with your good deeds. Return and stay in line alongside My particular servants and enter My Paradise and Garden of Eden.

It is for this reason and following His remarks in this noble verse that the faithful and intimate believers are always hopeful. As an example, one finds the Late Ayatullah-ul-'Uzma Imam Khomayni, (may he rest in peace in Paradise), remarks at the end of his very important will that:

"I am departing from you while having peace of mind, and I am confident in heart, while I am happy from within and while I am hopeful in spirit for Allah's grace and forgiveness."

He who knows that Allah is All-Wise and Omniscience, and He has not created anyone in vain, is optimistic.

He who knows that his leader and his Imam is a perfect man, elected by Allah, and is innocent of every deviance and error, will be having peace of mind.

*"...**Verily I have appointed you an Imam** (**leader**) **for mankind...**"*[22]

He who knows that his way of life is obvious and his future is going to be better than before, is confident in his soul.

"While the world to come is better and more lasting."[23]

He who knows that Allah loves the righteous has warm feelings with regard to his righteous deed.

Factors Which Generate Anxiety and Worries

One of the most common diseases of the present century is worries and anxieties, for which various reasons have been mentioned. The symptoms of this disease include, isolation, depression, inferiority complexes and purposelessness.

A depressed person becomes so because of finding that nothing is in line with his wishes, while the one must not abandon altogether those few instances which might be in keeping with his wishes for the sake of not having obtained all that he has desired.

A depressed person thinks as to why all people do not love him while such a thing is impossible in the case that even Allah and Gabriel also have got enemies. Therefore, one must not expect that all love him.

A depressed person thinks that all people are bad, while it is not so, and Allah, addressing the angels who thought so, answered them negatively.

A depressed person thinks that all the unpleasant things come from outside his self, while the main causes of frustration have their origin in reactions generating from within ourselves.

An anxious person is worried at the onset of every activity and thus he feels lonely and scared.

For repelling such a mood, Hadrat Ali (as) says:

"When you are afraid of something, cast yourself in it."[24]

This means that you may make yourself involved in whatever you are scared of, for fear of everything exceeds its own limits.

An anxious person worries as what will occur in future. This case may be treated by trusting Allah and by one's own perseverance.

As one has been frustrated in some of his affairs, he may worry as to be frustrated in all circumstances.

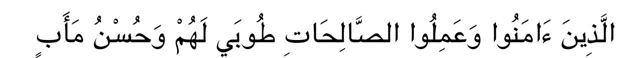
As one relies on individuals and some powers which are not sustaining, one will be anxious and worried once those sources of power are shaken.

Briefly, and concisely, such cases as lack of gratitude for one's services by the people, feelings of guilt, fear of death, being brain-washed by the family as to the lack of one's power to cope with problems and his lack of knowledge of those things, and jumping to conclusions are some of the factors which cause anxieties and can be adequately dealt with by Allah's remembrance, His power, His amnesty, and His favor which all bring one's peace of mind.

The verse says:

“(The guided are) those who believe and their hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah. Behold! By Allah’s remembrance (only) the hearts are set at rest.”

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 29



29. “Those who believe and do righteous deeds; joy is for them, and a goodly (final) return.”

People are in four categories:

Believers:

Those who both believe and their acts are righteous.

Pagans:

Those who are neither believers nor their acts are decent.

The evil-doers:

Those who are believers but their acts are not righteous and decent.

The hypocrites:

Those who are not believers but their apparent acts are decent.

The Arabic term /t�b a/ is either an infinitive, or it is the feminine gender of /’atyab/ which means ‘the best’. We have not got any example specific to this meaning in the verse to include all the utmost good ones.

Perhaps, we have it in a quotation that /t�b a/ is a tree which has its roots in the house of the Prophet (S) and that of Ali (as), and its branches cast their shadow over the faithful[25], in which case this serves as an allegory that all the good have their origin in pledge of and are somehow connected to the celestial leaders.

When some short-sighted persons criticized the Prophet (S) as to:

“Why you kiss Fatimah Zahra (as) so much?”

He (S) said:

“When I was taken to Paradise at the night of Mi‘raj, I ate from the fruit of the ‘T�b a tree’ out of which Fatimah (as) has been originated and appeared, and whenever I desire the scent of Paradise, I smell my

daughter, Fatimah"[26].

The success of the unbelievers and those who are distanced from good acts is not profound.

As Hadrat Ali (as) says:

"There is no good in pleasures which are ensued by the Fire of Hell" [27]

Explanations

1. The sweet worldly life as well as the happy ending of the life in Hereafter will only be procured with faith and decent righteous behaviour.

2. Success in this world makes sense and is of value when coupled with happy ending of the life Hereafter. How happy they are and what a good happy ending awaits them.

The verse says:

"Those who believe and do righteous deeds; joy is for them, and a goodly (final) return."

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 30

كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهَآ أُمَمٌ لِّتَتْلُوَا عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ

30. "Thus did We send you among a nation before whom (other) nations have (come and) passed away, in order that you might recite to them whatever We have revealed to you, whereas they reject the Beneficent (Allah). Say: 'He is my Lord, there is no god but He; on Him only I rely, and unto Him is my return."

We have already discussed about the Divine blessings which are conferred upon the people who are believers and the righteous and the rewards they deserve.

Now, Allah (s.w.t.) deals with the blessing of the prophetic mission bestowed on the highly-esteemed Prophet of Islam (S), implying that as We provided the believers and the righteous with the blessings of reward, We designated your Ummat with the utmost blessing of your celestial prophetic mission.

Some commentators have argued that this signifies that: As We commissioned prophets for previous nations, We thus also sent you for the nation of Islam. Your nation is not the first one. Before this nation, there have also been other nations and tribes as well.

The verse says:

"Thus did We send you among a nation before whom (other) nations have (come and) passed away..."

The main purpose and objective of your heavenly mission is to read to them the Qur'an, which is Our revelation revealed to you, so as to enable them to engage in meditation about its instructive contents and topics and learn admonitions and draw lessons from them.

However, the tribe of Quraysh are blasphemous about 'Rahman' (the Beneficent) and say that they know 'Allah', but they do not know Rahman (The Beneficent). The Prophet (S) was commanded to tell them that 'Rahman' (The Beneficent) is his Lord, the One Whom they deny and ignore, and Who is unique and peerless.

The Beneficent is his Creator and his administrator to whom he has left all his affairs to administer, and he has made allegiance to His obedience and submit to His verdict. And his return is towards Him and his repentance involves Him alone.

The verse continues saying:

"...in order that you might recite to them whatever We have revealed to you, whereas they reject the Beneficent (Allah). Say: 'He is my Lord, there is no god but He; on Him only I rely, and unto Him is my return."

Explanations

1- The prophetic mission of the blissful Prophet (S) has occurred among the nation of Arabs, yet other verses of the Qur'an are explicit in declaring that he is the prophet of all nations.

"And We have not sent you but to all mankind..."[28]

2- The prophetic mission of the godly prophets is a Divine tradition and it is based on His grace and His blessings. And the duty which is incumbent on the prophets is conveying the Divine revelations and ordinances to the people.

3- Reasons and rationale for our faith in Allah and the issues involved are: His Lordship (my Lord), His Unitarianism (there is no god but He), His provision of asylum for all (I rely only on Him), and our return is to Him (unto Him is my return).

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 31

وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرءَاناً سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ الأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَي بل لِلَّهِ الأَمْرُ جَمِيعاً أَفَلَمْ يَيْأَسِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَن لَوْ يَشَآءُ اللَّهُ لَهَدَي النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً وَلاَ يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيباً مِن دَارِهِمْ حَتي يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

31. "And if there were a Qur'an by which the mountains were moved or the earth were cloven asunder with it, or the dead were made to speak thereby, (still they would not believe). But the affair is Allah's altogether. Have not those who believe yet known that if Allah had willed He would certainly have guided all the people? And (as for) those who disbelieve, there will not cause to afflict them because of what they do a calamity, or it will alight close to their habitation, until Allah's promise comes. Verily Allah will not fail the tryst."

The Occasion of the Revelation

Some great commentators have claimed that this holy verse has been revealed in response to a group of pagans of Mecca who were sitting next to the door of Ka'bah and had sent after the Prophet (S) who hoping to lead them, came to them.

They said that if he wanted them to follow him, he should remove back the mountains of Mecca by his Qur'an so that the tight and limited land there would become vast.

They told the Prophet (S) that he considered himself no less in rank than Dawūd for whose sake Allah had conquered the mountains; or he should conquer wind for them as it was over dominated by Sulayman; or he should enliven his grandfather 'Qasiy' (the grandfather of Quraysh) because Jesus (as) used to make the dead alive, and he was no less than him.

At this time, the verse was revealed implying that what they said was because of their obstinacy and not for embracing the Faith.

As was already mentioned in the discussion of the occasion of revelation, this verse was revealed in response to the pagans' pretexts which were raised owing to their obstinacy and not for the sake of embracing the faith. They asked for performing extemporarily miracles from the Prophet (S).

Allah says:

"And if there were a Qur'an by which the mountains were moved or the earth were cloven asunder with it, or the dead were made to speak thereby, (still they would not believe). But the affair is Allah's altogether..."

However, all of these are at His disposal and thus He does whatever He deems fit.

Nevertheless, you are not seeking the truth and if you were, you could be content with the signs which have already been exposed to you by the Prophet (S).

Then, the Qur'an adds:

"...Have not those who believe yet known that if Allah had willed He would certainly have guided all the people?..."

But, He will never do so, because such a compulsory faith lacks any value and is devoid of all kinds of spirituality and development which man needs.

Then the verse implies that the pagans are always at the stake and mercy of the invasion from pounding calamities for their deeds, which are damaging and devastating to them in the form of the fights of the Islamic warriors.

The verse continues saying:

"…And** (**as for**) **those who disbelieve, there will not cause to afflict them because of what they do a calamity…"

And in case that such disasters are not inflicted upon them within their houses, they enter near their houses so as to provide lessons for them and be shaken in order to return to Allah.

The verse says:

"…or it will alight close to their habitation…"

And such warnings will continue ever more till the ultimate decree of Allah will be issued.

Such an order might concern and be an allusion to death or reference to the Day of Judgment, or, as some claim, it may be a hint to the 'Conquest of Mecca' which devastated the last bastion of the enemies.

The verse adds:

"…until Allah's promise comes…"

Anyway, Allah's promise is decisive and He will never break His promise or deviate from its conditions.

The verse concludes:

"…Verily Allah will not fail the tryst."

Explanations

This holy verse explains the utmost climax of the hostility and obstinacy of the pagans, just like verse 111 of Surah Al-'An'am which says:

"And even if We sent down the angels to them, and the dead spoke to them and We mustered all things before them,** (**even then**) **they would not believe…"

The Qur'an is a Book which has shaken what has been firmer than mountains and has enlivened those who have been deadlier than the mortally dead. It has provided life for the dead mind and souls and the

stone-hearted ignorant Arab people, and if there were a Book to be able to move mountains, and rise the dead, it is this same Qur'an.

One may conclude from remarks made by Imam Kazim (as) that there are clues and secrets in the Qur'an by which one can conquer nature.

Incidentally, do not expect all to accept the Faith as hostility and obstinacy are both inherent incurable diseases of human societies. If one is seeking after the Truth, one miracle is more than enough for him to accept the Faith. But, if someone is obstinate, he may ignore even the most explicit miracle.

Miracles are under Allah's control and not to be incited on proposals and whims of obstinate people. In the meantime, Allah's Will is toward voluntary guidance of man, and it is not based on their compulsion and toward forceful scrutiny.

Pagans must expect strikes from Allah on their country and on their borders and the Divine warnings sometimes come to us directly and are directed toward us and sometimes they come indirectly and are directed to others and the regions in our neighboring.

"...And (as for) those who disbelieve, there will not cause to afflict them because of what they do a calamity..."

The pagan people are always in the course of devastating and pounding catastrophes and extensive accidents because of their paganism and their heinous deeds, namely wars, famine, massacre, entanglement, etc., so that they may witness the punishment of their evil and viscous deeds and be therefore warned against them.

1. Surah Al-'Ins an, No. 76, verse 3
2. Surah Muhammad, No. 47, verse 17
3. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 4
4. Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 7
5. Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 25
6. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 142
7. verse under discussion
8. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 212
9. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 284
10. Surah 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, verse 47
11. Surah At-Taqabun, No. 64, verse 11
12. Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 16
13. The verse under discussion
14. Surah Al-Mu'min, No. 40, verse 34
15. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 107
16. Surah Al-Layl, No. 92, verse 12
17. Surah TaHa, No. 20, verse 14
18. Surah H□d, No. 11, verse 37
19. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 23

20. Surah TaHa, No. 20, verse 124
21. Surah Al-Fajr, No. 89, verses 27 and 28
22. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 124
23. Surah 'A'la, No. 87, verse 17
24. Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 71, p. 362
25. Bih ar, vol. 8, p. 117, 120
26. Bihar, vol. 8, p. 188
27. Bihar, vol. 41, p. 104
28. Surah Saba, No. 34, verse 28

Section 5: Messengers of Allah Were Mocked At

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 32

وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِن قَبْلِكَ فَأَمْلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ

32. "And messengers before you were certainly mocked at, but I gave respite to those who disbelieved, then I seized them** (**in My Wrath**)**; then** (**see**) **how was My retribution?"

Addressing the Prophet (S), He proclaims in this verse that you are not the only one who is confronted various requests and proposals for explicit miracles by this pagan group and who is mocked and ridiculed by them.

This matter has a long record in the history of the prophets and many of the prophets prior to you were also mocked and ridiculed. However, We did not punish those pagans immediately.

On the contrary, we provided them with a second chance so as to enable them to wake up and return to the path of the truth or, at least, to be provided with a sufficient ultimatum. For, though they are vicious and guilty, there is still room for Allah's favor, grace, and wisdom.

The verse says:

"And messengers before you were certainly mocked at, but I gave respite to those who disbelieved..."

Anyway, this opportunity and delay does not mean that their punishment is a forgotten affair. Therefore, We then captured them after the expiry of the date of their respite. And so did you note or witness as to how our punishment was? This fate will also be the destiny awaiting your obstinate nation as well.

The verse continues saying:

“...then I seized them (in My Wrath); then (see) how was My retribution?”

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 33

أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَآئِمٌ عَلَي كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ قُلْ سَمُّوهُمْ أَمْ تُنَبِّـئُونَهُ بِمَا لاَ يَعْلَمُ فِي الأَرْضِ أَم بِظَاهِرٍ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بَلْ زُيِّـنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَصُدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ

33. “Is He then Who watches every soul as to what it earns (like the idols)? And yet they ascribe partners to Allah. Say: ‘Name them! Do you inform Him of something (partners) He does not know in the earth, or is it (just) a show of words?’ Rather, to those who disbelieve their devising are made to appear fair seeming, and they are kept back from the (right) path; and whomever Allah leaves to stray, for him there will be no guide.”

How is it That You Align and Consider Allah as a Counterpart for the Idols?

The Qur’an then returns to the issue of monotheism and paganism in this verse. It addresses the people with this clear evidence and asks: Can one put Him on a parity? Is He Who overlooks all and is the protector and guardian of all, and witnesses the action of all equal with the one who lacks all the above characteristics?

The verse says:

“Is He then Who watches every soul as to what it earns (like the idols)?...”

To supplement His previous discussion and to present an introduction for the next discussion, He asserts:

“...And yet they ascribe partners to Allah...”

Allah provides answers for them using different methods immediately.

At first He commands:

“...Say: ‘Name them!...”

That is, how would you consider as counterparts for Allah the Almighty, a number of anonymous beings which lack any title and value, and are ineffective?

Secondly, as about the issue which predisposes one to ask how such partners exist for Allah whom He is not aware of their existence despite His Omniscience.

The Qur’an inquires:

“...Do you inform Him of something (partners) He does not know in the earth...”

Thirdly, the fact is that you yourselves are not confident from the bottom of your heart that such a thing may exist, is evident from uttering the words ‘shadowy appearance’ in which there is no correct concept implied and you have sufficed to it.

The Qur’an continues saying:

“...or is it (just) a show of words?’...”

It is for this reason that these pagans call on Allah when they are caught in the hard entanglements of life, for they know clearly in their hearts that the idols are of no use.

Fourthly, as the pagans lack a correct understanding and as they imitate and follow blindly their whims, they are not able to judge rationally and correctly.

It is for this reason that they are misled and seduced in this manner. However, in the view of the pagans, their lies have been decorated (and as a result of their inner wickedness are of the opinion that their thinking is identical with reality).

The verse says:

“...Rather, to those who disbelieve their devising are made to appear fair seeming...”

And they have been obstructed from Allah’s path.

And whomever Allah considers as seduced, that is, after delivering ultimatum on him, no other one can lead him and direct him to the right path.

The verse continues saying:

“...and they are kept back from the (right) path;”

‘The Divine astray’ signifies the reaction of one’s own incorrect behaviour which are misleading for him, and as this trait and quality has been involved in such acts, they are being attributed to Allah.

The verse says:

“...and whomever Allah leaves to stray, for him there will be no guide.”

Incidentally, the fact that Allah is ‘the guardian of all’ denotes that He administers all affairs, is the protector of everything, is qualified and capable for them, superintends, records and registers everything, and whoever departs from the knowledgeable, single, unique and protecting Allah, will be entangled in the abyss of paganism and polytheism.

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 34

لَّهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَعَذَابُ الأَخِرَةِ أَشَقُّ وَمَا لَهُم مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَاقٍ

34. “There is chastisement for them in the life of the world, and the chastisement of the hereafter is certainly more grievous, and for them shall not be against (the Wrath of) Allah any protector.”

The Qur’an makes allusions in this verse to the painful punishments which will face them in this world and the hereafter. These chastisements naturally include defeats, frustrations, misfortunes, damaging to one’s reputation and so forth.

It implies that there are punishments for them in this world, and the punishment of the hereafter is harder and more intensive, for it is eternal, physical and spiritual, coupled with all kinds of discomfort.

The verse says:

“There is chastisement for them in the life of the world, and the chastisement of the hereafter is certainly more grievous...”

And if they think that there is any way out of these, or they contemplate on some means of defense, they are making a grave mistake, for, nothing will protect them from Allah’s Wrath.

The verse continues saying:

“...and for them shall not be against (the Wrath of) Allah any protector.”

Explanations

The punishment in the Hereafter is hard, for:

All means and devices will be cut in the Doomsday.

“...and their ties (between them) are cut asunder.”[1]

Kinship will be of no use:

“...there shall be no ties of relationship between them on that day...”[2]

No sacrifices will be accepted.

A culprit is ready to sacrifice all his kin and even the entire world:

“...the guilty one would fain redeem...”[3]

Offering apologies is not useful:

"The Day on which the excuse of the unjust shall not benefit (***them***)***..."***[4]

One's friends mind their own business and abandon one another:

"And friend shall not ask friend."[5]

It is continuous and everlasting:

"Abiding therein forever, the torment shall not be lightened for them..."[6]

No alleviation would be condescended to:

"...the torment shall not be lightened for them..."[7]

It will be both bodily and spiritual:

"Taste you (***this***)***! Verily you are Mighty, full of Honour!"***[8]

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 35

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الاَنْهَارُ أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَّعُقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ النَّارُ

35. "The likeness of the Garden (***of bliss***) ***which the pious are promised,*** (***is such that***) ***beneath it rivers flow, its fruits and its shades are everlasting. This is the End of those who keep from evil, and the End of the unbelievers is the Fire."***

From among the methods of education in the Qur'an, one can cite comparison and evaluation among individual's cases and the end-result of the truth and the untruth.

Therefore, as the future of the pagans was already explained in the previous verse, the ultimate destiny of the men of virtue is being discussed in his verse so that one can select his own way of life with a more and better understanding when comparing the two.

Therefore, this noble verse deals with Resurrection and specifically with the blessings of Paradise and with the infernal punishments.

At first, it says:

"The likeness of the Garden (***of bliss***) ***which the pious are promised,*** (***is such that***) ***beneath it rivers flow..."***

The second attribute relating to the Gardens of the Paradise is that their fruits are everlasting and

perennial. They are not of the sort of this world in which case the fruits are seasonal and appear only in certain seasons, or under certain circumstances.

In this life, the fruits sometimes disappear altogether in some years because of pestilence and for unforeseen reasons. Their shadow is also eternal.

The verse says:

"...its fruits and its shades are everlasting..."

One can conclude from this sentence that the Gardens of the Paradise have no autumn and one may conclude still further that illumination of light, or similar to it, also exists in Paradise in its nature.

At the end of the holy verse, after recounting the three-fold characteristics of Paradise, the Qur'an implies: Such is the ultimate destiny of the devout and the pious, though the fate of the pagans is Fire and inferno.

The verse says:

"...This is the End of those who keep from evil..."

In this beautiful meaning, the blessings of Paradise have been explained in detail and with delicacy. However, with regard to the inhabitants of Hell, He remarks in a short, harsh, and rough tone:

"...and the End of the unbelievers is the Fire."

Anyway, Paradise is a compensation for one's virtuosity and it will not be offered to anyone undue.

The reward of the devout and self-abstaining from the worldly sins, is eternal happiness in Hereafter.

"...its fruits and its shades are everlasting."

And whatever one can make out of the Paradise is similar and like that one,

"the likeness of the Garden (***of bliss***)***..."***.

Otherwise, the Paradise is not to be comprehended fully by some limited beings such as us.

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 36

وَالَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ اُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنَ الأَحْزَابِ مَن يُنكِرُ بَعْضَهُ قُلْ إِنَّمَآ اُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلآ اُشْرِكَ بِهِ إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُوا وإِلَيْهِ مأَبِ

36. "And those people to whom We have given the Book will rejoice in what has been sent down

to you. And of the clans are some who deny a part of it. Say: ‘Verily, I am commanded to worship Allah and not to associate (***aught***) ***with Him. Unto Him*** (***only***) ***I invite*** (***you***)***, and unto Him is my return’.”***

Of course, accepting the verses is important, however, their acceptance and embracing of them eagerly and with joy is of more significance.

The different kinds of reactions of the people as to the revelation of the verses of the Qur’an have been alluded to in this verse. It illustrates how the truth-seeking individuals and the truth-loving ones embraced and submitted to whatever was revealed to the Prophet of Islam (S) while the hostile and obstinate individuals started their opposition to it.

It says:

“And those people to whom We have given the Book will rejoice in what has been sent down to you...”

That is, the Truth seekers from among the Jews and the Christians and the like of them are happy for the revelation of these verses to you, because, on the one hand, they witness that as consonant and harmonious with the signs and symbols which they have at their disposal, while, on the other hand, they are finding it as a source of freedom and salvation for themselves from the vices generated by the superstitions of seemingly scholars of Christian and Jewish and the like of them which have placed them under the yoke, and thus have deprived them of the intellectual freedom and human development.

Then the Qur’an implies that, however, some parties negate parts of the verses which have been revealed to you.

The verse says:

“...And of the clans are some who deny a part of it...”

The purpose in mind of these disbelieving groups has been the population of the Jews and of the Christians who were not submitting even to their own faith and in face of their own celestial Book because of their tribal and religious fanaticism which had dominated them. They were in fact some groups and parties which followed only their own line.

It might also concern those pagans who had no specific religion or way of life. Rather, they were groups and parties which were dispersed originally, though their opposition to the Qur’an and Islam had made them united.

At the end of the holy verse, He commands the Prophet (S) that he must be headless with regard to this and that one’s opposition and obstinacy.

On the contrary, he should stand in line with his original and direct path and state that he is only commissioned by Allah to worship the only Allah and does not associate any partners for Him; and that he calls and directs to Him and his return, and every one's return is to him.

The verse says:

"...Say: 'Verily, I am commanded to worship Allah and not to associate (***aught***) ***with Him. Unto Him*** (***only***) ***I invite*** (***you***)***, and unto Him is my return'."***

Here allusion is made to the fact that the true monotheist and real theist has no other lines and schedule to follow except submission to all of Allah's commandments.

وَكَذَلِكَ أَنزَلْنَاهُ حُكْماً عَرَبِيّاً وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَآءَهُم بَعْدَ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَالَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلاَ وَاقٍ ﴿37﴾

37. "And thus have We sent it (***the Qur'an***) (***as a true***) ***authority in the Arabic, and if you follow their low desires after what has come to you of knowledge, there shall not be for you against Allah any guardian or a protector."***

The appointment of the prophets and the revelation of the celestial Books are the wise Divine way of treatment. Therefore, He implies in this verse that as We sent the people of the Book and the former prophets celestial Books, We also revealed this Qur'an to the Prophet of Islam (S) while it contains clear and obvious commandments.

The verse says:

"And thus have We sent it (***the Qur'an***) (***as a true***) ***authority in the Arabic..."***

It is cited in the commentary of Majma'-ul-Bayan: The reason as to why the Qur'an has been called commandments is that there are commandments in it as to what is allowed and what is prohibited.

And the reason why it is called Arabic is that its bearer has been an Arab prophet.

In other words, the application of the word /'arabiyyan/, mentioned in the verse, is a reference to the fact that the language of the Messenger of Allah (S) has been Arabic, for which reason Allah's way of treatment has been such that every prophet must communicate His Book through the language of his own people and, hence, He remarks in Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 4:

"We sent no prophet except the ones who communicated in the language of their own people."

And, in order that we know that Allah has no kinship with anyone, and even if the prophets supposedly go a wrong way, they will be faced with the Divine punishment, addressing the Prophet (S) with a threatening and decisive tone of voice, the Qur'an implies that: if he follows their whims after having

been briefed, he will receive Divine punishment and no body will be able to protect and preserve him as against Allah's power.

The verse says:

"...and if you follow their low desires after what has come to you of knowledge, there shall not be for you against Allah any guardian or a protector."

Although there was certainly no probability for the Prophet (S) to be deviant with such a stage of chastity, knowledge and awareness, this meaning makes it clear that Allah entertains no special relationship with any one. Even if the Prophet (S) enjoys an elevated position, it is because of his submission servitude, faith, and his perseverance.

It has been cited in the Majma'-ul-Bayan that although this meaning is addressed to the Prophet of Islam (S), the main objective is his followers.

1. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 166
2. Surah Al-Mu'minn, No. 23, verse 101
3. Surah Al-Ma' arij, No. 70, verses 11 to 16
4. Surah Al-Ghafir, No. 40, verse 52
5. Surah Al-Ma' arij, No. 70, verse 106
6. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 162
7. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 162
8. Surah Ad-Dukhan, No. 44, verse 49

Section 6: The Two Witnesses of the Truth

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 38

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلاً مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجاً وَذُرِّيَّةً وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ

38. "And indeed We sent Messengers before you, and appointed for them wives and children; and it was not for any Messenger to bring a sign (miracle), but by Allah's permission. For every term there is a book prescribed."

The appointment of the prophets is one of the Divine ways of treatment, and performing of miracles is not achieved on request or upon the wishes of people. On the contrary, it occurs with Allah's permission.

Incidentally, the prophets used to live like other people and they had wives and children. The verse says:

"And indeed We sent Messengers before you, and appointed for them wives and children..."

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"We are the children of Hadrat Muhammad (S) and our mother has been Fatimah (as). And Allah has given none of the prophets anything which has not been provided for Hadrat Mohammad (S)."

Then, he recited the above mentioned verse.1

And in another quotation, he (as) remarks:

*"We are the descendents of the Messenger of Allah."*2

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an declares that there is a book for everything which Allah has ordained, therein everything is recorded like one's life-span, death, and other affairs each of which is subject to the time when Allah has assigned according to His Own discretion.

The verse says:

"...and it was not for any Messenger to bring a sign (miracle), but by Allah's permission. For every term there is a book prescribed."

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 39

يَمْحُوا۟ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ

39. "Allah effaces out whatever He pleases and He confirms (similarly), and with Him is the Mother (Basic Source) of the Book."

The Qur'anic sentence:

"Allah effaces out whatever He pleases and He confirms (similarly)"

presents a universal law which has been alluded to in the various Islamic texts. It states that the actualization of the various beings and events in the world follows two stages:

The stage of decisiveness within which no changes may occur, (and it has been referred to in the verse as 'the Mother of the Book'). The other stage or the second stage, within which changes may occur, is referred to, here, as the effacement and confirmation stage.

The verse says:

"Allah effaces out whatever He pleases and He confirms (similarly), and with Him is the Mother

(***Basic Source***) ***of the Book.”***

At times, these two stages are referred to as ‘the Preserved Table’ and ‘the Effacement and Confirmation Tablet.’ It seems as though no alteration can find its way in one of the above Tables and it is completely preserved, while the other Table is prone to undergo changes, something may be written on it and then can be wiped out or something else be written instead of it.

Imam Baqir (as) has been quoted as saying:

“There are some events which are certain to happen while there are others which are dependent on some conditions and circumstance with Allah, each of which He deems He precedes it and each of which He wills He effaces it and confirms the other, as He chooses.”[3]

Anyway, according to what is concluded from the verses of the Qur’an and quotations, all pre-ordained Divine acts are of two kinds.

Those matters which should be everlasting and thus their laws are also perennial like the verses which say:

“My word shall not be changed...”[4]

and where it says:

“every thing has its exact measurement before Allah.[5]

Or where it implies that Such pre-determined acts are kept recorded in the preserved table:

“In a guarded tablet...”[6]

and:

“It is a written Book,”

“Those who are drawn near (***to Allah***) ***shall witness it.”***[7]

Those matters which are uncertain and their expediency depends on the people’s behaviour, such as people’s repentance from sin which is ensued by forgiveness as it is expedient, or donation to charity which is expedient for the repulsion of calamities, or oppression and cruelty which causes Divine punishment for the corruption which goes with it; that is, Allah is not confined in His administration of the universe as His infinite wisdom and His Omniscience and because of the change of conditions, He can introduce changes in His system of creation and laws.

It goes without saying that such changes are not signs of His ignorance or reconsideration or His regret, but they are based on His Wisdom and changes in conditions or the end of the cycle of that matter. The

Glorious Qur’an has many examples for this meaning, among which are the following:

“...Call upon Me, I will answer you...”[8]

Man can obtain one’s interests with supplication calling and prayer and changes his own destiny.

“...Allah may after that bring about reunion.”[9]

The Divine law is not constantly the same everywhere. Probably, Allah introduces a new plan with the emergence of the necessary conditions.

***“...every moment He is in a state** (**of glory**).”*[10]

That is, He tends to a particular task in completing His grace and blessings to people.

“...but when they turned aside, Allah made their hearts turn aside...”[11]

“And if the people of the towns had believed and kept from evil, We would have certainly opened up for them blessings...”[12]

Allah’s wrath course will be diverted by His grace and blessings.

“Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition...”[13]

Allah does not change the destiny of any nation unless they alter themselves.

“Except him who repents and believes and does good deed; so these are they of whom Allah changes the evil deeds to good ones...”[14]

*“...**but if you revert** (**to your sins**) **We shall** (**also**) **revert** (**to Our punishment**)...”*[15]

Question: If the knowledge of Allah is identical with His Essence and it is unchangeable, then whatever there has been in His knowledge must be executed, otherwise, it is identical with ignorance.

Answer: Allah’s knowledge is based on the system of means and devices. That is, He knows that if such an instrument is used it will result in a specific conclusion, and if the other one is used such a thing will ensue; and thus His knowledge is not apart from the knowledge of causes and devices. [16]

One of the criticisms, which is proposed by the Sunni people as against the Shiites, is that they claim: The Shi‘ites regard /bida’/ (change in an earlier divine ruling, or heresy) for Allah, and they imagine that /bida’/ means change in the Divine knowledge and discovery of the offence for Allah.

While what the Shi‘ites have in mind is not so and their objective is the appearance of something which we human beings imagined the reverse of it before.

The Arabic term /bida'/ in creation is like 'abrogation in law'. That is, as if we consider by the appearance of a regulation or a verdict that it is binding and continuous, while after sometime we notice that it has been changed.

Certainly, it does not follow that the law–maker has been regretting or he has been ignorant of it. Rather, the circumstances have led to these changes in the law, just like a prescription which the physician changes in accordance with the existing conditions of the sick.

However, as soon as the patient's mood changes, the physician issues a new prescription. Therefore, similar to the case of abrogation in the verses, which in fact is regarded as a kind of /bida'/, and is accepted by all of the Islamic sects, they must also accept /bida'/ in this very stated sense. Thus, /bida'/ signifies our ignorance and not of Allah's ignorance.

Some Examples of "bida'"

We thought that when Allah ordered Hadrat 'Ibrahim (as) to decapitate his son, He wanted Ishmael (as) to be killed and his blood be shed on the earth. But, it was later revealed that the Divine Will had been to put the father to the test and not to kill the son.

Concerning the issue of Allah's having a date with Hadrat Mūsa (as), we thought that the course of supplication and talking to Allah would take 30 nights:

"And made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights...", [17]

however, we found later that the course has been for forty nights from the beginning. At first 30 nights and later 10 nights were added.

We thought that the qiblah of the Muslims has been Bayt–ul–Muqaddas forever. However, the verses clarified for us the change of qiblah, telling us that our constant qiblah has been Ka'bah.

When the signs of Allah's wrath appeared, even Hadrat Yūnus (as) became confident that the Divine punishment was certain to come and that his infidel nation would perish. Thus, he went out from among the people, but the people accepted the faith and Allah's wrath was removed:

"...except the people of Jonah (Yūnus)? When they believed, We removed from them the penalty..." [18]

Anyway, the meaning of /bida'/ is not Allah's ignorance and changing of His knowledge, for Allah knew from the beginning that the blood of Ishmael would not be shed; or the course of Moses' supplication and talking to Allah would last for forty nights; the qiblah of the Muslims would be Ka'bah; and the nation of Yūnus would deserve being saved.

However, the apparent picture of the commandments and events were such that man had a different

thought. Thus, no change has occurred in the Divine knowledge and it is we whose view has undergone changes.

In this stated sense /bida'/ has got numerous educational implications, among which is that man is hopeful for changes of conditions till the last minutes of his life. The spirit of trust enlivens in him and he will not fall into the trap of outward aspects.

Thus man's faith in the invisible world and Allah's power may increase; and by way of repentance, donations and prayers, he seeks to change the course of accidents and the Divine wrath.

Imam Sadiq (as) has remarked:

"Allah has pledged faith in /bida'/ accompanied with Unity from all prophets."

In another tradition, we are advised that whoever thinks that a new problem has been clarified for Allah which He did not know already, we should try to avoid him[19].

Explanations

Allah has open hands for changes in the system of creation and divine religion:

"Allah effaces out whatever He pleases..."

Allah has not left the creation process to itself.

"Allah effaces out whatever He pleases and He confirms (similarly)..."

The obliteration or reconfirmation of the laws, which govern the universe, are in His Own hands.

The effacement and the confirmation of the laws done by Allah are based on His Knowledge and Wisdom.

"...and with Him is the Mother (Basic source) of the Book."

The world of creation has a registry book in which all events are recorded.

Some Traditions

1- Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) has been quoted as having asked the Prophet (S) with regard to the above verse, and he (S) said:

"I illuminate your eyes with the interpretation of this verse and I also illuminate the eye of my Ummah after me by its interrelation: Charity given in its proper place, and kindness to one's parents and achieving any other good deeds, done in a correct manner, convert unhappiness into happiness, and prolong one's life, and prevent dangers." [20]

Allusion is made here to the fact that happiness or wretchedness is not an unavoidable matter. Even if man has done certain jobs which align him along the line of the wretched ones, he can still change his position and his destiny by turning to good things, especially helping and serving the people, since the room for these affairs is 'the Table of effacement and confirmation' and not 'the Mother of the Book'!

Imam Ali–Ibn–il–Hussayn, Zany–ul–' Abidin (as) has also been quoted as saying:

"If there were not one verse in the Qur'an, I would foretell for you all the events of the past and the future until the Day of Resurrection."

The one quoting the tradition says he asked which verse he (as) meant.

He answered:

"Allah said: 'Allah effaces out whatever He pleases and He confirms (similarly), and with Him is the Mother (Basic Source) of the Book'."

This tradition provides the reason that at least a part of the knowledge of the great leaders of the religion, regarding the different events, concerns 'the Table of effacement and confirmation', and 'the Preserved Table', with all its traits, is peculiar to Allah, and He instructs only those parts of it that He deems worthy to those special servants whom He considers as suitable.

2– Imam Baqir (as) has been quoted as saying:

"Some events are certain to happen and they do become realized. And there are some other events which are depended on conditions and are conditional before Allah; whichever He deems fit, He will give it the priority and whichever He pleases, He will efface out, and whichever He pleases, He will confirm." 21

Therefore, we have it in a tradition from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

"Allah, Almighty and Glorious, sent no prophets except that He took these three pledges from him: Confession as to be subservient and subject to Allah; negation of all kinds of paganism; and the acceptance of this creed that Allah gives priority to whatever He pleases and delays whatever He pleases." 22

In fact, the first testament is concerned with obedience and submission to Allah, and the second one relates to the campaign against the paganism, and the third one relates to the subject of /bida'/, the result of which is that man's destiny is in his own hands and by changing the conditions, he can be covered by Allah's favor or by His punishment.

Finally, the Shi'ite scholars, basing their argument on the above, are of the opinion that when /bida'/ is attributed to Allah, it may be rendered as /'ibd a'/, that is, the appearance of something which was not

apparent formerly and what would not be predicted.

As for attributing this matter to the Shi‘ites, that they believe that Allah sometimes regrets His Own acts or becomes aware about what He did not know already, is of the greatest crimes and is of the most unforgiving accusations.

Therefore, some of the Imams have been quoted as saying:

“He who believes that something will be revealed and exposed to Allah today which He was not aware of yesterday, then such a person must be abhorred and detested.” [23]

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 40

وإِن مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلاغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ

40. “And We will either let you see part of what We promise them or cause you to die, for your duty is only to make* (*the Message*) *reach them, while* (*calling them*) *to account is on Us.”

One must conclude of all that what is being observed of Allah’s favour on the Muslims and the Divine punishment over the pagans is only some partial actualization of the Divine promises.

Even the death of such individuals as the dear Prophet of Islam (S) cannot hinder the actualization of the Divine promises which will be realized at the time when predicted.

Therefore, in this verse, concerning the divine penalties which the Prophet (S) was promising and they were expecting them and even they criticized as to why his promises were not fulfilled, He says to him:

And if parts of what We have promised them would be shown to you in your life-time as of your victory and of their defeat as well as ‘the liberation of your followers and the capture of their followers’ or We would make you pass away before such promises are materialized, under all such circumstances your duty and mission has been to convey your prophetic mission’s message and the settlement of accounts with them is on Us.

The verse says:

“And We will either let you see part of what We promise them or cause you to die, for your duty is only to make* (*the Message*) *reach them, while* (*calling them*) *to account is on Us.”

In the meantime, one concludes from this verse that Islam will dominate all other religions, and within the Prophet’s lifetime and after his death, the roots of paganism will be eradicated.

And this meaning is reconfirmed by verse 33 of the Surah At-Taubah which says:

"He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may prevail it over all religions, though the polytheists may detest it."

Imam Baqir (as) said:

*"This process goes on at the time of Hadrat-i-Mahdi (a.j.) when no one will remain on the earth unless he confesses to the prophetic mission of Mohammad (S)."*24

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 41

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لاَ مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

41. "Do they not see that We come unto the earth and reduce it from its sides? And (were) Allah commands, there is no reverser for His command, and He is swift in reckoning."

We read in various Islamic quotations that the objective of reducing the sides of the earth means the loss of lives of the great scholars. 25

One must take lessons from the history and the ultimate end of the life of the predecessors, and thus not to be skeptic about the promises and the testaments of Allah.

The termination of governments and personalities depend on the Divine Will, and the theocracy and the commands of Allah are not vulnerable.

The verse says:

"Do they not see that We come unto the earth and reduce it from its sides? And (were) Allah commands, there is no reverser for His command..."

Incidentally, it is clear that the meaning of 'the earth' in here is the inhabitants of the earth. That is: '*Do they not notice the reality that the tribes, civilizations, and governments are constantly falling and are being annihilated?*'

And this provides a warning to all people, including the good and the evil, even in cases of the scholars and the learned men of human communities in which once a member of them dies, the entire world may sometimes suffer from shortcomings, which case is self-explanatory and shaking.

Then the holy verse implies that the administration and the issuing of decrees are His Own monopolies and no one else is in a position to reject those commands or obstruct His decrees, and He is fast in setting accounts.

The verse says:

“...and He is swift in reckoning.”

Surah Ar-Ra‘d – Verse 42

وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ الْمَكْرُ جَمِيعاً يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفَّارُ لِمَنْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

42. “And indeed those before them devised, but the devising altogether is Allah’s; He knows what every soul earns, and the unbelievers soon will know for whom is the Ultimate abode.”

The Qur’an closes ranks with whatever is other than Allah in order to enable all to concentrate on Him and on Him alone, despairing from others.

For instance, it says:

“...Verily the glory is wholly Allah’s...”[26]

Once you appeal to others for the sake of acquiring prestige and good reputation, beware that all prestige and honour is for Him alone.

Elsewhere, the Holy Qur’an says:

“...that the Power is wholly Allah’s...” [27]

All powers are His.

And in this verse, it says:

“but the devising altogether is Allah’s”,

in order that man would not tend to others for obtaining prestige, power, and politics.

One of the best examples of Allah’s devising is His offering of a respite to the deviants in such a manner that they feel that they are on the right track. However, Allah has repeatedly said in the Qur’an that the pagans must not think that their respite signifies Allah’s love unto them. On the contrary, He respites them to fill their pot to the fullest.

Anyway, the pagans who were before them, played tricks on the believers, mixing their paganism with tricks and they did all this to refute the prophets.

As Allah obliterated all their tricks, He will do the same with this lot as well.

The verse says:

“And indeed those before them devised, but the devising altogether is Allah’s...”

Therefore, Allah returns their tricks to themselves and He will provide clear evidences for His servants. No one's traits are hidden from Allah whether they are good or bad, as he is knowledgeable unto all that there is to be known.

The verse continues saying:

"...He knows what every soul earns..."

That is, Allah is aware of all tricks which are played on the Prophet (S), and he obliterates them all, revealing His religion.

Here, Allah threatens them by saying that they will soon learn as whose will be the Paradise. And this happens when the believers will enter the Paradise and the pagans will be sent into Hell. That is, the pagans will realize whether the ultimate happy ending is yours or theirs, which case reveals when Allah makes His religion manifest.

The verse continues saying:

"...and the unbelievers soon will know for whom is the Ultimate abode."

Surah Ar-Ra'd – Verse 43

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلاً قُلْ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيداً بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

43. "And those who disbelieve say: 'You are not a messenger'. Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book."

We read in the first verse of this Surah that whatever is revealed to the Prophet (S) is identical with the Truth, though most people disbelieve it. We also read in this last verse of the Surah that the pagans refute the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S).

This indicates to the climax of the obstinacy and hostility of the seduced people as against the Divine Messenger and his words of truth. Therefore, it implies in this noble verse that they use a new pretext everyday, and they demand a new miracle, and eventually they claim that he is not a prophet.

The verse says:

"And those who disbelieve say: 'You are not a messenger'..."

Addressing them he should answer them: It was sufficient for them that two persons bear witness between them and him, one of whom was 'Allah' and the other one consists of those who have a full command of the knowledge of the Book, of the Qur'an.

Both parties are aware that I am His messenger: Allah as well as those who are knowledgeable about this Book, that is the Qur'an.

The verse says:

"...Say: 'Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book'."

And this further stresses once again the miraculous nature of the Qur'an in its different aspects.

As for the sentence;

"...and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book",

we have got the news which are in proximity of sequential order that the objective in mind is Amir-ul-Mu'mineen, and in some, that the objective in mind is the Immaculate Imams.

However, these quotations do not confirm a monopoly and as we have repeatedly said allusions to cases are made to perfect example or examples, and we claim that if the objective in mind is the glorious Qur'an, no one else is knowledgeable as to the apparent and the hidden and as to the interpretations of the Qur'an, having monopoly in such cases except the household of the prophet.

As He declares:

"...none knows its (hidden) interpretation except Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge..."[28]

Abū Sa'id Khidary says:

"I asked the Prophet (S) about: the Qur'anic phrase:

'said he with whom was knowledge from the Book',

(which is found in the story of Solomon).

He answered:

'He was the inheritor of my brother Solomon and replaced him.'

I inquired:

'Whom is it (the above verse) talking about and to whom allusions are being made?'

He answered:

'He is my brother Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as)'." [29]

The author of Atyab-ul-Bayan claims that we may say the objective in mind of ‘the knowledge of the Book’ is the greatest Name of Allah, of which ’Asif-Ibn-Barkhya the inheritor of Hadrat Sulayman, only knew a faction and not more. And Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as), as well as other Immaculate Imams (as), knew all in its entirety except what was kept by Allah for Himself.

Some Islamic traditions denote that the relationship of the Qur’anic phrase /min-al-kit ab/ to /‘ilm-ul-kit ab/ is just like a drop with respect to a green sea. Certainly, when one of the companions of Hadrat Sulayman, who had some partial knowledge of the Book, could at a glance revoke the throne of the queen of Saba before him, how mighty one might be if he possesses all the knowledge of that Book!

According to the quotations, as we said, the objective in mind about whom he has the knowledge of the entire Book is Hadrat Ali (as) and Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).

For further information about these quotations refer to Tafsir Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, Tafsir Burhan, Tafsir Safi, and Tafsir Kanz-ud-Daqa’iq.

O’ Allah! Open the gates of your blessings to us and provide us with the knowledge of the Book, and engage our souls with the light of the Qur’an and provide our thoughts with such potentialities that we do not refer to other than You and not to regard anything as supreme once faced with Your Will.

Amin.

1. Bihar, vol. 24, p. 265
2. Tafsir-ul-Burhan, and ‘Ayyashi
3. Tafsir Burhan, vol. 2
4. Surah Qaf, No. 50, verse 29
5. The current Surah, verse 8
6. Surah Al-Burūj, No. 85, verse 22
7. Surah Al-Mutaffifin, No. 83, verses 20 and 21
8. Surah Ghafir, No. 40, verse 60
9. Surah At-Tal aq, No. 65, verse 1
10. Surah Ar-Rahman, No. 55, verse 29
11. Surah As-Saff, No. 61, verse 5
12. Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 96
13. Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 11
14. Surah Al-Furqan, No. 25, verse 70
15. Surah Al-’Isra, No. 17, verse 8
16. Shahid Mutahhari
17. Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 143
18. Surah Yūnus, No. 10, verse 98
19. Safinat-ul-Bih ar, vol. 1, p. 61
20. Al-Mizan, vol. 11, p. 419
21. Al-Mizan, vol. 11, p. 419
22. ’Usūl-i-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 114 and Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 61
23. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol.1, p. 61
24. Tafsir-i-Majma‘-ul-Bayan and Burhan

25. Tafsir Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn
26. Surah Yūnus, No. 10, verse 65
27. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 165
28. Surah Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 7
29. Al-Mizan

Surah ‘Ibrahim, Chapter 14

(Abraham) No. 14
(Revealed in Mecca)
52 verses in 7 sections

The Content of Surah ‘Ibrahim

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

This holy Surah contains 52 verses which were revealed in Mecca, except the verses 28 and 29 that are about those killed in the Badre campaign and are revealed in Medina.

There are some matters in this Surah relating to the prophetic missions of the prophets, their admonitions, their tidings as well as the prayers of Hadrat-i-’Ibrahim (as). According to the commendation of quotations, reading this Surah has got blessings attached to it, among which one may name being secure and feeling of security from disasters, poverty and insanity.

This Surah, owing to its discussion about Hadrat-i-’Ibrahim (as), has been named as ‘Surah ‘Ibrahim’, and like its preceding Suras, such as: Yūnus, Hūd, and Yūsuf, it begins with Alif. Lam. Ra. The first verses of these holy Suras deal with the characteristics of the Qur’an .

Section 1: Qur’an Revealed to Lead Mankind to Light

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 1

الر كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَي النُّورِ بإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَي صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

1. "Alif, 'A' Lam, 'L' Ra, 'R'. (***This is***) ***a Book which We have sent down to you so that, by their Lord's permission, you lead out the people from the darkness*** (***of ignorance***) ***into the light*** (***of faith***)***, into the way of the Mighty, the Praised*** (***One***)***."***

Similar to some of other suras of the Qur'an, this Surah begins with the abbreviated letters. What is worth mentioning here is that out of 29 Suras, which begin with abbreviated letters, in 24 of them the words next to them are about the Glorious Qur'an.

This indicates that there is a connection between these two, i.e. the abbreviated letters and the Qur'an the Lord is perhaps seeking to exhibit that this great celestial Book, with such great meaningful content, that tops in the leadership of all human beings, begins with simple letters of the alphabet, which by itself is a sign of the significance of this Divine miracle.

Anyway, after the mention of the letters Alif, Lam, Ra, He says:

"(***This is***) ***a Book which We have sent down to you so that, by their Lord's permission, you lead out the people from the darkness*** (***of ignorance***) ***into the light*** (***of faith***)***..."***

In fact, all the educational objectives, as well as spiritual and material aims of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an are condensed in this single sentence:

'leading the people from the darkness to the light',

which means directing them towards enlightenment from the state of utter darkness; or directing the people from the state of darkness of paganism towards the state of illumination of faith; from the state of the darkness of oppression and tyranny towards the state of the enlightenment of justice; from the state of corruption and injustice into the state of righteousness and justice; from sin to piety and virtuosity, and finally from the state of disunity and dispersion into the state of unify.

As the source of all good is the Pure Essence of Allah, and the main pre-condition of understanding of monotheism is focusing on this very reality, the Qur'an adds immediately that all of these are achieved in accordance with the permission of people's Lord:

"...by their Lord's permission..."

To clarify the issue further for the direction towards enlightenment, the Qur'an implies that this

enlightenment of faith is in the path of the Lord, the Dear and the Praised One. The Lord Whose Glory is a sign of His Power; and His Praised state is a sign of His unlimited favours and blessings.

The verse says:

"...into the way of the Mighty, the Praised (One)."

Explanations

To bring people out of darkness into the light has been repeated several times in the Qur'an. At times, this act is attributed to Allah:

"...Allah is the Guardian of those who have faith; He brings them out of the darkness into the light..."[1]

Sometimes, this is attributed to the prophets:

"...'Bring forth your people from the darkness into the light..."[2]

At other times, it is attributed to the Book, like the verse under discussion.

Using metaphors of profanity, disunity, ignorance and skepticism as well as paganism, described as "***darkness***", is for the sake that man in these cases is amazed, like the time when he is in darkness.

Light is the means for seeing, awakening, movement, guidance and development, as they are all included in the celestial Book and the way of Allah.

The Qur'an is not adequate in itself; the Divine leader is also necessary for guiding the people as well.

The philosophy underlying the revelation of the celestial Books, and the prophetic mission of the prophets are concerned with the salvation of mankind from the darknesses: from the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge; from the darkness of profanity into the light of faith; from the darkness of disparity into the light of unity, and finally from the darkness of sin into the light of virtue.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 2

اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ

2. "Allah, unto Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and woe to the unbelievers for severe chastisement."

In this verse, a lesson on monotheism is discussed as a way of introducing Allah, where He says:

"Allah, unto Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth…"

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an attracts the attentions, to the issue of Resurrection, after concentration on the original cause of the universe, it implies: woe unto the disbelievers for whom awaits the severe chastisement of the Doomsday.

The verse continues saying:

"…and woe to the unbelievers for severe chastisement."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 3

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَي الأَخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجاً أُوْلَئِكَ فِي ضَلالٍ بَعِيدٍ

3. "Those who prefer the life of the world to the Hereafter, and hinder (***others***) ***from the path of Allah, and seek to make it crooked. They are in far error."***

To enjoy oneself in this world is permissible, but to prefer this world to the next is a dangerous thing, for ones adherence to this world, necessarily obstructs him from his worship, spending out of belongings, participating in the Holy War, obtaining the allowed profits, truthfulness, and the performance of religious duties.

And, eventually, seeking of worldly pleasures paves the way for paganism and is leading a campaign against religion which consequences aberration.

Therefore, the Qur'an tends to introduce the pagans in this verse, and it makes their position quite transparent by mentioning three parts of their characteristics so that everybody can recognize them at first sight.

At first, it says:

"Those who prefer the life of the world to the Hereafter…"

And they sacrifice every thing even their faith and the truth in face of the mean interests, passions, and their low desires.

Then the Qur'an implies that they are not even content with this, but, in addition to their own seduction, they seek to seduce others as well. They stand in the way of the people in order to obstruct them from the path of Allah. Or they even tend to introduce changes in it as well.

In fact, their job is to decorate the low desires and persuade the people to commit sins, frightening them of being honest and pure, while seeking to bring others in line with themselves. Through adding

superstitions and all kinds of distortions to it as well as creating dirty and ugly traditions, they try to achieve their objectives.

The verse says:

"...and hinder (**others*****) from the path of Allah, and seek to make it crooked..."***

It is obvious that such people distance themselves from the true path in an extensive manner with such qualifications and overt behaviour. Such a state of being misled which makes it an impossibility for them to return to the point of the truth because of its remote distance. However all such conditions and states of mind are the product of their own behaviour.

The verse says:

"...They are in far error."

Incidentally, one must know that obstruction of Allah's path is not confined to one or two cases.

On the contrary, inappropriate propaganda, overt committing of sins, spread of the methods of corruption and of ways of negligence, inciting of skepticism, creating and spreading the means of discord, and spreading of seducing films and publications, misrepresenting the religion of the truth, introducing the wrong kind of people as the identification religious figures, are all among tens of examples of the obstruction of Allah's path.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 4

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

4. "And We never sent a messenger except with the language of his people, so that he might explain (**Our Message*****) to them clearly; then Allah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."***

The object in mind as of /lis an-i-qaum/ in this verse is not confined only to the language of the people, for it sometimes happens that a speaker speaks in the language of a people though they might not understand him properly.

As Allah remarks in other verses:

"So We have made it (**the Qur'an*****) easy in your tongue..."***[3]

Hadrat-i-M□sa also asks Allah to release his tongue in such a manner that the people understand his words:

“And loose a knot from my tongue,”

“(That) they may understand my saying.”4

The verse under discussion says:

“And We never sent a messenger except with the language of his people, so that he might explain (Our Message) to them clearly...”

In the meantime, the purpose of “***Allah leads astray***” is depriving of obstinate people from His grace. Otherwise if Allah wanted to mislead any one directly, He would neither send any Books, nor would He send any prophet.

In other verses we read that Allah misleads the unjust, transgressors, and the lavish persons. That is, man deprives himself from the divine guidance and paves the way for his own seduction by committing sins and acts of tyranny.

Some commentators have claimed that the subject of /yaš a’/ is the people and not Allah. That is, Allah misleads him who wishes himself to be misled and leads the one whom he wishes to be led. The verse says:

“...then Allah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.”

He is Omnipotent under all circumstances and as a result of His Glory and Power though He will not mislead any one for no reason as a consequence of His wisdom. However, the first steps are voluntarily taken with their utmost freedom by the servants on the path of Allah (s.w.t.) and then the enlightening rays of guidance are cast and the grace of Allah covers them in their hearts.

Those who have alienated themselves from eligibility of meriting Allah’s approbation because of their obstinacy and fanaticism, and their hostility against the truth and as a consequence of being immersed in the abyss of their passion or tyranny, are deprived from the favour of guidance and are lost in utter darkness.

As it can be seen, the origin and the source of guidance and seduction lay in our own hands.

Incidentally, one must keep in mind that the propagation of the truth by the Prophet (S), which has been done in the language of his local people, is not incompatible with the cosmopolitan and universal nature of the religion.

For, the content of the text or message does not have any particular medium of expression, and, on the recommendation of the Qur’an, some groups must learn religious matters, whether by going on exodus or by giving up their special favours so as they can teach others.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 5

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَي بِآيَاتِنَآ أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَي النُّورِ وَذَكِّرْهُم بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ

5. “And indeed We sent Moses with Our Signs (saying): ‘Bring forth your people from the darkness into the light and remind them of the days of Allah. Verily there are signs in this for every patient, grateful (one)’.”

Allah is alluding in this noble verse to one of the samples of the sending of the prophets as against their contemporary despots for getting them out of the darkness and directing them to light.

He says:

“And indeed We sent Moses with Our Signs (saying): ‘Bring forth your people from the darkness into the light…”

Then, referring to one of the great missions of Moses (as), it remarks:

“… and remind them of the days of Allah. …”

“***The days of Allah***”

are all those days which stand prominent in the history of mankind.

Each day which marks the beginning of a new chapter and provides an instructive lesson for man and has witnessed the emergence or the uprising of a prophet or has witnessed the downfall of an unruly despot or pharaoh, is considered as “the day of Allah”.

In short, on every day when one witnesses that justice is being achieved and an injustice or any innovation has been wiped out, all such days are among the days of Allah.

A tradition quoted from Imam Baqir (as) indicates that he remarked:

“The days of Allah refer to: the day on which the uprising of the promised Mahdi (as) takes place, and to the day of Return to life, as well as the Resurrection day.”

At the end of the verse the Qur’an remarks that: in these words and throughout all the days of Allah there are sings for each man and for every persevering, resisting and grateful individual.

The verse says:

“…Verily there are signs in this for every patient, grateful (one)’.”

Therefore, the faithful people will neither lose their way when they are having a hard time so that they submit to the events, nor do they become arrogant and negligent during the days of victory and affluence. All they often do is that they constantly show their gratitude towards Allah.

Explanations

1- Concentration on history leads to and paves the way for one's patience and gratitude. The remembrance of the catastrophes and of the past bitter events and their removal, makes man grateful and thankful, and once his attention is focused on the resistance of the nations and on their eventual victory, this invites man to patience and perseverance.

"…Verily there are signs in this for every patient, grateful (*one*).

2- All days are the days of Allah (s.w.t.), though the day of the glorification of Allah's power is a different matter. (The glorification of His Power is seen through His punishment over the pagans, and the glorification of His favor over the believers is regarded as the days of Allah).

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 6

وإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَي لِقَوْمِهِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ أَنجَاكُم مِنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ وَيُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُم بَلآءٌ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ

6. "And** (**remember**) **when Moses said to his people: 'Remember Allah's favour to you when He delivered you from Pharaoh's people. They afflicted you with evil chastisement, slaughtering your sons, and sparing your women; and in this was a great trial from your Lord."

He alludes to one of those Divine days, in this verse, and to those eventful and illuminated days which existed in the history of the Children of Israel, and the mentioning of which provides an appropriate admonition for the Muslims.

The Qur'an, addressing them, implies that you should remember the time when M�sa told his own nation that they would remember Allah's blessings and favor at the time when He liberated you from the hands of the Pharaoh's people.

Verily they were punishing you and inflicting the worst kind of chastisement on you, used to decapitate your sons before you and used to keep your wives alive for the sake of service to them.

The verse says:

"And** (**remember**) **when Moses said to his people: 'Remember Allah's favour to you when He delivered you from Pharaoh's people. They afflicted you with evil chastisement, slaughtering

your sons, and sparing your women…"

Such has been the case with every colonizing power throughout history that it has always sought to destroy and perish parts of the aggressive, active and resisting powers, or to render useless other sections of such powers, and finally, to weaken other segments so as to utilize them for the sake of and in line with their own interests.

The verse continues saying:

"…and in this was a great trial from your Lord."

Incidentally, such trial and test has not been the case only in connection with the Children of Israel, but it has also been the case with all the nations as well that the day of their liberation and independence from the hands of the despots, has been always remembered as the Divine days.

1. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 257
2. The current Surah, verse 5
3. Maryam, No. 19, verse 97
4. Surah TaHa, No. 20, verses 27-28

Section 2: Moses' Exhortation

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 7

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

7. "And (remember) when your Lord declared: 'If you be thankful I will certainly increase you (your blessings) and if you be ungrateful, verily My chastisement is indeed severe'."

Allah announces that if you are grateful for My favours, I shall augment your favors and if you deny them, My punishment covers all those who are ungrateful and deny them.

It says:

"And (remember) when your Lord declared: 'If you be thankful I will certainly increase you (your blessings) and if you be ungrateful, verily My chastisement is indeed severe'."

Imam Sadiq (as) has remarked:

"Whoever was given a favor and by his heart made confessions as to having that and thanked Allah with

his speech, praising Him, no later would he have finished uttering his words than Allah would have commanded that his blessings be augmented."

This verse is the most important and the most explicit verse of the Qur'an in regard to thankfulness due to divine blessings or being ingratitude to them, which has been discussed after the verse concerning the blessings of freedom and the formation of the Divine government under the leadership of Hadrat-i-Mūsa.

This is the secret as to the fact that the Divine government and the godly leaders are the supreme blessings for mankind, and if thanksgiving is not performed for them, Allah will inflict a severe punishment on those who are not grateful.

There are various stages for thanksgiving:

A- Cordial thankfulness, in which case, man regards all the blessings from Allah.

B- Verbal thankfulness consists of uttering the words such as: *"(All) praise belongs to Allah."*

C- Practical gratitude, which comes about as a result of performing religious rituals and spending one's time along side gaining Allah's satisfaction and in the service of people.

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"Avoiding sins is (a knid of) being grateful for the favours."

And he also said:

"Thanking for Allah's blessing is done once a person regards all blessings as originated from the part of Allah (and not from his own intelligence, wisdom, reasoning and one's own struggle or that of other people's), and that he is content with what Allah has given him, and does not use Allah's blessings as a means of committing sins, he is really thankful to Allah. Real gratitude consists of the utilization Allah's blessings for Allah's ends."[1]

Thankfulness for the Divine blessings is very tiny and unmentionable.

Some Islamic traditions indicate that Allah revealed to Moses:

"Thank Me as it is My due!"

Moses answered:

"It is an impossible act, for each word of thanks requires another word of thanks."

The revelation came:

"Your confession as to the fact that you are aware that whatever exists has its origin in Me, is the best way of thanking Me."[2]

Incidentally, if we use Allah's blessings in ways other than the path of Allah, we have practiced the act of ingratitude and paved the ground for disbelief and deserve chastisement.

The verse says:

"...and if you be ungrateful, verily My chastisement is indeed severe'."

Several Traditions Concerning Gratitude

1- Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) once said:

"Continue (the act of) thanksgiving so as your favour becomes continuous." [3]

2- Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"There are three things with which provide no harm: praying when one is in difficulty, asking for forgiveness when one is sinning, and showing gratitude when one is affluent." [4]

3- Imam Sadiq (as) also said:

"The gratitude for the blessings is avoiding the prohibitions, and the totality of thankfulness is that one says: '(All) praise is (only) Allah's, the Lord of the Worlds'." [5]

4- Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

"Thanking for the blessing causes it to be preserved from alteration and guarantees its sustenance." [6]

5- Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

"The result of showing gratitude is the multiplication of the favours." [7]

6- Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

"Any blessing for which gratitude is expressed does not terminate; and when ingratitude is shown, it will not last long." [8]

7- The holy Prophet (S) remarked:

"The quickest punishment for the sins is (that of) ingratitude of a blessing." [9]

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 8

وَقَالَ مُوسَي إِن تَكْفُرُوا أَنتُمْ وَمَن فِي الأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

8. “And Moses said: ‘If you be ungrateful, you and whoso is on the earth, all together, verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy”

Our faith or disbelief and our gratitude or our ingratitude will have not any impact on His Inherent Essence.

We must not hold Allah any indebtedness for our faith or acts since Allah is in no need of our deeds.

This holy verse is a confirmation and complementary to the discussion regarding the gratitude and ingratitude, which were referred to in the previous verse.

It is said from the tongue of Mūsa Ibn ‘Imran implying that he reminded the Children of Israel that if they and the entire people of the world become disbelievers, showing ingratitude towards the blessings of Allah there will be no harm to Him for He is in no need and is praise-worthy.

“And Moses said: ‘If you be ungrateful, you and whoso is on the earth, all together, verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy”

In fact, thanking Allah for His blessings, and accepting the faith are sources of increasing one’s blessings and one’s evolution and pride, otherwise Allah is needless and were all the existing beings to turn ungrateful, His kingdom would remain just intact as ever.

To define the Qur’anic term /qanyy/ many commentators have claimed that it means withdrawal of ones needs.

We have been of the opinion that it means “possession” and it includes the totality of Attributes of perfection of the Essence, qualities consisting of knowledge, power, life, sovereignty, splendour, magnitude, loftiness and so on and so forth.

They require withdrawal of needs and defects. And the term /hamid/ embraces the totality of attributes of action, which include all the Divine acts irrespective of creation, nourishment, death, revival, health, disease, blessings and catastrophe, reward, chastisement, needlessness, poverty, development, restraint, tightness, legislation of ordinances, sending prophets on their mission, substituting successors, allocation of duties, and His other acts are all consonant and in accordance with wisdom and expedience, that are correct, appropriate, and timely, all of which signify ‘Justice’ and are among the principles of the Shi‘ite doctrine.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 9

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُاْ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَالَّذِينَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلاَّ اللّهُ جاَءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَدّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَالُوا إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِ وإِنَّا لَفِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَنَآ إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ

9. "Has not the account of those before you reach you of the people of Noah, and ' Ad, and Thamūd and those who (came) after them? None knows them but Allah. Their messengers came to them with clear signs (miracles) while they thrust their hands into their mouths, and they said: 'Verily we disbelieve in (that) which you have been sent with, and verily we are in doubt about that unto which you invite us'."

This verse is one of the examples of reminding and calling attention to the Divine days which was dealt with in the fifth verse of the current Surah, where it says:

"…and remind them of the days of Allah…"

According to Shaykh-i-Tūsi, (May his soul be sanctified) cited in Tafsir-i-Tibyan, there are differences between the Arabic words /šakk/ and /rayb/. The former means natural skepticism while the latter signifies that kind of skepticism which is mixed with suspicion and accusations.

A doubt, which may pave the ground for research and acceptance of the truth, is a constructive type and useful type of criticism; while that kind of skepticism which is expressed with regard to the Clear Evidences', or with regard to miracles is only of the obstinate and destructive kind of doubt which stands in the way of man for accepting the truth.

Incidentally, one can translate the Qur'anic holy sentence /faraddū 'aydiyahum fi afw ahihim/ in several ways:

A- The dissidents shut the mouth of those who were uttering the truth by putting their hands on their mouth.

B- The miracles and the reasons of the prophets were so strong as if they had taken people's hands and put them on their mouth; alluding metaphorically to the fact that the language of the people was obstructed because of the truth and they had no words to say.

C- The opponents of the prophets were so angry that they bit their fingers.

D- The opponents of the prophets, at the presence of their prophet, would put their hands on their mouth, metaphorically alluding to the fact that they silence themselves and stop preaching.

Anyway, here the Qur'an refers to the fate of some groups of previous nations in several verses. Those

nations who took to the road of ingratitude as against Allah’s blessings and went on opposing and disbelieving in face of the call of the Divine leaders and their logic. Eventually, the Qur’an explains their acts to be an emphasis on what was said in the former verse.

It says:

“Has not the account of those before you reach you of the people of Noah, and ‘ Ad, and Thamūd and those who (came) after them?...”

Then, it adds:

“...None knows them but Allah...”

This means that no one is aware of the news of them, except Him.

Then, as a further explanation about their biographies, it implies that their prophets called on them with clear evidences though they put their hands on their mouths because of their amazement and denial, saying:

We are ungrateful for whatever you are sent for, for we are skeptic as to what you call us for, and how would it be possible for us to accept your call despite such a doubt and skepticism?

The verse says:

“...Their messengers came to them with clear signs (miracles) while they thrust their hands into their mouths, and they said: ‘Verily we disbelieve in (that) which you have been sent with, and verily we are in doubt about that unto which you invite us’.”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 10

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُم مِن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرَكُمْ إِلَي أَجَلٍ مُسَمّي قَالُوا إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلاَّ بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ

10. “Their messenger said: ‘Is there any doubts about Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth?’ He calls you to forgive for you of your sins and respite you till an appointed term. They said: ‘You are nothing but mortals like us; you intend that you turn us away from what our ancestors used to worship. Then bring us some clear authority’.”

In the previous verse, the pagans told the prophets:

“You call us to the way of Allah.”

However, in this verse, the prophets told them:

"Allah calls you."

That is, our call does not initiate from our side and is not directed towards us. On the contrary, it originates in Allah and terminates in Allah as well.

According to, Zamakhshari and Maraghi, the promises of the Qur'an concerning the faithful relate to the forgiveness of all of their sins, while concerning others the case is forgiveness of some of their sins:

"...to forgive for you of your sins..."

Anyway, as was explained in the previous verse with regard to the pagans and disbelievers and their lack of faith owing to their skepticism, immediately in this verse, He negates their skepticism with clear reasoning and in a concise statement, saying:

"Their messenger said: 'Is there any doubts about Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth?'..."

Probably, the Arabic term /fatir/ (the Originator) refers to the splitting of the preliminary matter mass of the world which we are up-dated about in everyday life of the existing science we read that the totality of the world mass matter consisted of an integrated continuum which burst asunder, revealing and causing the emergence of the globes.

Anyway, here, as in other situations and cases, the Qur'an insists on the creation of the system the world of existence as well as the creation of the heavens and the earth for demonstrating Allah's Existence and His Attributes.

Then, it turns to answer the second criticism raised by the opponents whose criticism relates to the issue of the prophetic mission of the prophets. It implies that it is obvious that the Wise and Omniscient Creator of the world does not abandon His servants without a leader.

On the contrary, by sending you messengers, He calls you so as to remove your faults and pollutions and forgive your sins. And He gives you a limited amount of time in order that you go through your development process and make the most of your life.

The verse says:

"...He calls you to forgive for you of your sins and respite you till an appointed term..."

In fact, the call of the prophets has had two objectives in mind: The forgiveness of sins and the continuation of life till a pre-fixed date, both of which are in fact having a cause-and- effect for each other.

For, a society can continue to live which is on the whole pure from sins and injustice. However, despite all these, the obstinate disbelievers did not accept this enlivening call which was mixed with the evident

logic of monotheism. They answered their prophets with the words which were loaded with obstinacy and non-submission of the truth.

The verse says:

"...They said: 'You are nothing but mortals like us..."

Moreover you want to keep us from worshipping what our ancestors worshipped. In addition to all these, you must provide us with clear evidences.

The verse continues saying:

"...you intend that you turn us away from what our ancestors used to worship. Then bring us some clear authority'."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 11

قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِن نَّحْنُ إِلاَّ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَي مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نَّأْتِيَكُم بِسُلْطَانٍ إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَي اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

11. "Their messengers said (answering) them: 'We are nothing but mortals like you, but Allah bestows (His) favour on whomever He pleases of His servants; and it is not for us that we bring unto you any authority except by Allah's permission. And on Allah should the believers rely."

The Qur'an in this holy verse implies that Allah bestows (His) favours on whomever He pleases and appoints him as His prophet, yet, Allah, the Wise, knows who has the capacity and who is capable of performing such a great responsibility.

"...Allah knows best where to place His apostleship..."[10]

Incidentally, the disbelievers and the pagans had two claims to make with the prophets:

1- You are a man like all of us.

2- Perform the miracle which we propose for us.

The answer to these two claims has been provided in this verse. We do accept the fact that we are human beings just like you; but Allah granted us this favour and has provided us with revelations. And as for your claim saying that our miracles must be performed according to your request.

This cannot be achieved, for we reserve the right not to perform any miracles without Allah's permission.

Anyway, performing miracles is not our job, so that we tend to isolate ourselves sitting in a corner and

perform extraordinary things with everyone requesting a different miracle as he wishes, thus making perform of extraordinary things into a useless affair, reducing it to a plaything matter. On the contrary, we cannot perform any miracles without the command of Allah.

The verse says:

"Their messengers said* (*answering*) *them: 'We are nothing but mortals like you, but Allah bestows* (*His*) *favour on whomever He pleases of His servants; and it is not for us that we bring unto you any authority except by Allah's permission..."

Moreover, every prophet does perform miraculous works without being requested by the people in order to prove his legitimacy.

Afterwards, in order to provide the pretenders with a decisive answer regarding their various threats, they clarified their position, saying that all faithful individuals must rely on Allah, the same Almighty to Whose Power all powers are insignificant and useless.

The verse says:

"...And on Allah should the believers rely."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 12

وَمَا لَنَآ أَلاَّ نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَي اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانَا سُبُلَنَا وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَي مَآ ءَاذَيْتُمُونَا وَعَلَي اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

12. "And why should we not rely on Allah while He has guided us to our ways* (*of happiness*)*? And certainly we will bear patiently whatever hurt you inflict on us; and on Allah* (*alone*) *should the reliant rely."

The Arabic term /tawakkul/ signifies 'employing a lawyer or an advocate'. Such a person must have four attributes: perspicacity, honesty in keeping other's deposits, power, and affection. No one but Allah possesses all these attributes fully. Thus we must trust Him.

Imam Rida (as) said:

"The border of the trust is that, by belief in Allah, you be scared of none." [11]

Therefore, that Lord Who leads us will also protect us. Thus, we must solely trust Him.

Therefore, providing transparent justifications for the issue of trust, the prophets said as to why must they not trust Him and ask for His help in all circumstances? Why must they be frightened by the straw powers and threats while He has led them through the ways of happiness?

The verse says:

“And why should we not rely on Allah while He has guided us to our ways (***of happiness***)***?...”***

Then, they would continue saying that now that they rely solely on Allah, Who is not vulnerable and is supreme over all things definitely, they should stand against all of disbelievers’ tortures and harms.

The verse says:

“...And certainly we will bear patiently whatever hurt you inflict on us...”

Then, finally, they ended up their speech with these words:

“...and on Allah (***alone***) ***should the reliant rely.”***

The objective of /tawakkul/ is to enable one not to have feelings of inferiority and weakness when facing with the greatness of difficulties, but by relying on the unending vast power of Allah, he should consider himself as conquering and victorious. Thus, surely such a trust is hope-inspiring and strengthening, and can increase our resistance.

1. ’Us□l-i-Kafi, section: Thanks giving
2. ’Us□l-i-Kafi, vol. 4, p 8
3. Jami‘-i-’Ahadith-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 13, p. 545
4. Bihar, vol. 75, p. 365
5. Kafi, vol. 3, p. 95
6. Ghurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 2, p. 159
7. Nasikh-ut-Tawarikh, vol. 6, p. 145
8. Bihar, vol. 74, p. 420
9. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 710
10. Surah Al-’An‘am, No. 6, verse 124
11. N□r-uth-Thaqalayn

Section 3: The Disbelievers Punished

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 13

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُم مِنْ أَرْضِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا فَأَوْحي إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ

13. “And those who disbelieved told their messengers: ‘We will certainly expel you from our land, or else you return to our creed.’ Then their Lord revealed to them: ‘Certainly We will perish the

unjust'."

Question: Were the prophets pagan before the onset of their mission when they were requested by the pagans to return to the previous beliefs of pagans.

Answer: Firstly, perhaps the objective in mind of the disbelievers was the return of the prophets to be under to their own control. That is, they used to suggest supposedly you are believers, but you must not stand up against us and you, as well as your companions, deviate from our path.

Secondly, the Arabic word /'aud/ when is followed with /'il a/ it means return to the prior condition. However, now that it is followed by /fi/, it denotes change and not returning to the previous condition, which implies change of ideas into their creed.

Thirdly, the idea of returning to paganism probably implies the return of the prophets' companions and not of the prophets themselves.

Anyway, as is usually the case with the way of life of the illogical people, that they quit the course of reasoning when they become aware of their weaknesses in ideas and in words, abandoning reasoning, they rely on forces and powers.

Here, we notice when the prophets demonstrated their sound and explicit way of reasoning, which were discussed in the former verses, the obstinate and pretending pagans told their prophets that they would swear to drive them out of their lands unless they return to pagans' way of life which was the worshipping of the idols.

The verse says:

"And those who disbelieved told their messengers: 'We will certainly expel you from our land, or else you return to our creed.'..."

These unaware and arrogant people perhaps considered all of the lands as their own lands and they did not have any regards for their prophets, even they did not consider them as a compatriot, thus they used to say 'our land' while Allah has created the land and all its blessings for the sake of the righteous people.

Then the Qur'an implies that while at the same time, Allah expressed His compassion to the prophets and reassured them, revealing to them that the tyrants would be perished and, therefore, they should not be scared of such threats and no weakness must appear in the strength of their will.

The verse says:

"...Then their Lord revealed to them: 'Certainly We will perish the unjust'."

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 14

وَلَنُسْكِنَنَّكُمُ الأَرْضَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ

14. “And, certainly, We shall settle you in the land after them. This is for him who fears My Majesty and fears My threat.”

Allah, the Almighty, has promised that the oppressors will be perished and His saints would replace them, and since this promise has not been realized to the fullest possible way, it will be actualized at the time of the reappearance of Imam-i-Zaman (the Expected Mahdi) (‘aj.).

The blissful Qur’an has repeatedly promised that the saint of Allah (s.w.t.) will be ruling the earth and their enemies will be annihilated.

The Qur’an says:

“And, certainly, We shall settle you in the land after them. This is for him who fears My Majesty and fears My threat.”

We mention here only three cases regarding the verses concerning this Divine promise:

A- ***“And verily Our host will definitely prevail.”***[1]

B- ***“And Our word has already gone forth in respect of Our servants, the messengers;” “Most surely they shall be the assisted ones.”*** [2]

C- ***“...(as for) the land, My righteous servants shall inherit it.”*** [3]

Anyway, prevalence of the truth over the untruth and the formation of the Divine government by the saints of Allah are among the decisive and repeated promises of the Qur’an.

The Divine Essence is the source of all good and the blessings, and is lovely.

“...but for those who have faith, their love of Allah is more intensive...”[4]

What is to be feared is Allah’s position. Of course, if your friend is a judge and your case is taken to the court to him to be judged, you will he in awe of him about his court of justice and his position at the court, though he is your friend.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 15

وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

15. "And they** (**the prophets as well as the believers**) **sought victory, but every obstinate oppressor remained deprived.

Once all the prophets performed all their duties with regard to their nations, those who were supposed to become believers accepted the faith and the rest insisted on their paganism, and threatened frequently the prophets. It was at this time that they asked Allah for victory over the pagans.

The verse says:

"And they** (**the prophets as well as the believers**) **sought victory..."

Allah also accepted the prayer call of these true warriors for holy causes who were genuinely beseeching. And, eventually every deviant stiff-necked person became desperate and perished.

The verse says:

"...but every obstinate oppressor remained deprived.

All the prophets were expecting victory.

Noah called upon his Lord:

"...Verily I am overcome, so give help'."[5]

Other prophets also sought victory from Allah.

They used to say:

"...Our Lord! Decide between us and our people with truth, and You are the best of deciders."[6]

Thus the Qur'an, the blissful, through many verses deals with the victory of the prophets and the annihilation of the pagans as well as their punishment, declaring to the pagans decisively that the day of conquest will soon come and every spiteful oppressor will be punished by his own retribution.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 16

مِن وَرَآئِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَى مِن مَّآءٍ صَدِيدٍ

16. "Hell is before him, and he will be given to drink of festering fluid."

The Arabic term /war a'/ means the ultimate and the end of a course, as it is said in Persian, the end-result of this meal is becoming ill.

There are three kinds of drink in Hell:

1- A drink that consists of pussy fluid and blood, which comes out of a wound and is called ‘Sadid’.

2- Something which flows out of the skin of the hell-dwelling people and is called ‘Qassaq’.

3- The third drink is ‘melted copper’ which is called ‘Hamim’.

The drinks of the hell-dwelling people is burning and not quenching one’s thirst. A few Qur’anic verses in this regard are:

A: “...***who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels a sunder.”***[7]

B: ***“...They will be succoured with water like molten copper that shall scold the faces...”*** [8]

Of course, those who burned the hearts of the faithful and who slapped them on their faces, making blood-bath flow by their destructive weapons and chemical bombs, must not have any punishment other than what was said.

The verse says:

“Hell is before him, and he will be given to drink of festering fluid.”

However, the Paradise-dwelling people will live by the side of delicious tasting water of the streams, feeding themselves on delicious tasting milk and honey provided with them by Allah, and will enjoy themselves from all the Divine blessings.

“...and their Lord will give them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy.”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 17

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِن وَرَآئِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ

17. “He will drink it little by little which he can hardly swallow agreeably, and death will come to him from every side, while he will not be about to die, and there will be a vehement chastisement before him.”

The punishment of the hell-dwelling people is depicted well in the profile in this verse.

A- The chastisement of such people is bit by bit, little by little and gradual so as to be tortured to the utmost.

The verse says:

“He will drink it little by little which he can hardly swallow agreeably...”

B– The different kinds of punishments take the dwellers of Hell as to the brink of their death-beds, though they will not die despite all these.

The verse continues saying:

"...and death will come to him from every side, while he will not be about to die..."

C– The chastisements are followed by graver consequences, which will be ever increasing as well.

The verse says:

"...and there will be a vehement chastisement before him."

The Qur'an contains several qualities for the chastisement of the Hereafter Day: 'painful, 'severe', 'great', 'vehement' all of which mean and make allusions to the intensity and the magnitude of the type of chastisement.

The Arabic word /'is aqah/ denotes drinking water with one's own will. The sentence mentioned in the verse signifies that one will never drink that water willingly. 9

The blissful Prophet (S) remarked:

"Whoever drinks wine, his prayers will not be answered for forty days and it is appropriate for him that Allah makes him drink the stinking and infectious water of Hell."

The Arabic term /sadid/ means the festering fluid which comes out of a wound. And /tajarru'/: signifies sipping gradually and continuously. The Arabic term /'is aqah/ means making the drink flow through one's throat, and /'ištid ad/ means acceleration with all of one's power.

The Qur'anic word /' asif/ means a strong wind which blows during day-time, or it may mean the day in which blows a strong wind.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 18

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ لاَ يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَى شَيْءٍ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلاَلُ الْبَعِيدُ

18. "The parable of those who disbelieve in their Lord, their deeds are like ashes on which the wind blows severely on a stormy day; they will have no power over any thing out of what they have earned; that is the very straying, far (and deep)."

The issue discussed in the previous verses concerned mostly with the loss and the disadvantage incurred by the obstinate oppressors and of their deprivations. Here, we have an explanation upon the

same meaning.

Allah, the Almighty, converts the vices and the evils of the faithful into the good and the decent in case of their repentance, but the evil deeds of the disbelievers wipe out the impact of their good deeds.

Therefore, there is an explicit parable or example explained in this noble verse for the deeds of the unbelievers, which supplements the discussion of the previous verses as to the ultimate end of the pagans.

It says:

"The parable of those who disbelieve in their Lord, their deeds are like ashes on which the wind blows severely on a stormy day..."

The objective is all their deeds, even their apparently good deeds which are orientated from paganism and idolatry.

Just in the same way that ashes cannot stand in the way of a strong wind in a stormy day, even for one moment, and will spread immediately, and no one is able to assemble them, the same case is for the disbelievers in the truth who will be unable to gain any thing from the good deeds they have performed.

All will be lost and gone with the wind, leaving them empty-handed. Such is the case with being misguided to the utmost.

The verse says:

"...they will have no power over any thing out of what they have earned; that is the very straying, far (and deep)."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verses 19 - 20

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ

وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ

19. "Did you not see that Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth? If He wills He will take you away and bring (in your place) a new creation."
20. "And this is not difficult for Allah."

The Qur'an has repeated on several occasions that Allah has not created the heavens and the earth for vain and for the sake of fun of it.

The Qur'an says:

"And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport."[10]

Elsewhere He remarks:

"And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain, that is the opinion of those who disbelieve..." [11]

Of course, it is the disbelievers who presume that the creation of existence is aimless and out of question.

Now Allah declares that He has made man for the purpose of worshipping and of having faith and not for the sake of disbelieving and disobedience.

Hence, He says:

"Did you not see that Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth?..."

The Qur'anic term /ru'yat/ has been also employed in the sense of knowledge as well as its employment in the sense of 'perception' and 'seeing'. The meaning implied in the first sense is in mind in this context. This statement is addressed to the Prophet (S), but the main aim is his 'Ummat.

Do you not know that Allah created the skies and the earth as His Own wisdom required, which was in the name of the truth or for the aim of the truth? The purpose of the aim of the truth is the religion and worshipping. That is, He created the world so as the people worship Him (s.w.t.) and they merit His rewards.

The commentators of the Qur'an have held the view that the truth signifies 'being identical and harmonious'.

The structural system of the world of creation in here, as well as the skies and the earth, all show that there has been a great deal of wisdom, order, and aim involved in their creation. Neither Allah has been in need of their creation, nor would He feel any shortcomings brought about without them, for He is in no need of any thing.

Then, the Qur'an implies that the reason as to Him having no need to you and your believing is that when He determines He will take you, replacing you with a new generation of people.

The verse says:

"...If He wills He will take you away and bring** (**in your place**) **a new creation."

A new generation of people who are all believers and who do not commit any of the indecent acts

committed by you, for whoever is to be the author and the architect of some thing is also able to destroy it.

It is not impossible for Allah to annihilate you and create a new generation of people. The verse says:

“And this is not difficult for Allah.”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 21

وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ جَمِيعاً فَقَالَ الضُّعَفَآءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبعاً فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِن شَيءٍ قَالُوا لَو هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَدَيْنَاكُمْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَجَزِعْنَآ أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن مَحِيصٍ

21. “And they shall come forth in front of Allah all together. Then the week shall say to those who were the arrogant: ‘Verily we were your followers (in the world). Can you avert from us any part of the chastisement of Allah? They would say: ‘If Allah had guided us we too would have definitely guided you. It is all the same to us whether we cry or we are patient; there is no way for us to escape.”

The Arabic term /bur�z/ denotes ‘exit’, and the word /mub ariz/ refers to the person who comes forth out of the line of the army and who declares his intention and readiness for combating the enemy.

We had references made to the hard punishment and severe and painful chastisement of the obstinate disbelievers in some of the previous verses; the Qur’an follows this matter up and supplements it in this verse as well.

It first declares that all of them will appear in Allah’s court on the day of resurrection, (the oppressors, the pagans, the tyrants, including the ones who were authors or those who were subordinate in positions, the ones who led or the ones who followed).

The verse says:

“And they shall come forth in front of Allah all together…”

At this moment, the oppressed ones, that is, those ignorant lot who misled themselves to the sphere of darkness because of their blind obedience and imitation, addressing the seduced oppressors say: We were your followers and have been fallen into this entanglement of disastrous plight because of your leadership. Are you then ready to bear part of our burden?

The verse says:

“…Then the week shall say to those who were the arrogant: ‘Verily we were your followers (in the world). Can you avert from us any part of the chastisement of Allah?…”

But they immediately will answer them:

"...They would say: 'If Allah had guided us we too would have definitely guided you..."

Nevertheless, what a pity that there is no more room left for such complaints. It is all the same for us whether we become restless or go on crying; whether we are persevering or impatient as there is no way out of our plight for us.

The verse says:

"...It is all the same to us whether we cry or we are patient; there is no way for us to escape."

1. Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 178
2. Ibid verses 171-172
3. Surah Al-'Anbiy a, No. 21, verse 105
4. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 165
5. Surah Al-Qamar, No. 54, verse 10
6. Surah Al-A'r af, No. 7, verse 89
7. Surah Muhammad, No. 47, verse 15
8. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 29
9. Tafsir Tibyan
10. Surah Ad-Dukhan, No. 44, verse 38
11. Surah S ad, No. 38, verse 27

Section 4: Disbelievers Shall Be Disappointed – Truth Shall Be Established

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 22

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدتُّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِيَ عَلَيْكُم مِن سُلْطَانٍ إِلاَّ أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلاَ تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنفُسَكُم مَّآ أَنَاْ بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِن قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

22. "And Satan says, when the affair is decided: 'Verily Allah promised you the promise of truth; I also promised you but I failed to keep them to you, and I did not have any authority over you except that I called you and you responded me. Therefore, do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. Verily I disbelieved in your associating me with Allah from before. Verily the unjust, for them shall be a painful chastisement'."

In the Hereafter, sinners seek to get others involved in their sins and they try to find fellow-conspirators so as to put the whole blame on them for the wrong they have committed. Sometimes the sinner will say: "*Friends seduced me!*"

At other times he says: "*Corrupt leaders made me corrupt*". Some other times, he blames the Satan and regards him as the cause of his own seduction.

But, the Satan answers:

Do not put the blame on me, I did not have any role to play except wavering your opinion and calling you to it. It was you who decided to deviate and to become deviant.

The verse says:

"And Satan says, when the affair is decided: 'Verily Allah promised you the promise of truth; I also promised you but I failed to keep them to you, and I did not have any authority over you except that I called you and you responded me..."

The fact that the Satan has no domination over man, not only is verified by Allah but also the Satan himself confesses it.

Addressing Satan, Allah says:

"Verily (as regards) My (devoted) servants, there is not for you over them any authority..."[1]

and in this verse, Satan says:

"...and I did not have any authority over you..."

However, in the continuation of the above verse, the Holy Qur'an says:

"...Therefore, do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. Verily I disbelieved in your associating me with Allah from before. Verily the unjust, for them shall be a painful chastisement'."

Anyway, the Divine promises are all true and they are identical with the reality.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 23

وَأُدْخِلَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلاَمٌ

23. "And those who believed and did righteous deeds will be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein shall they abide for ever by their Lord's permission; their greetings therein is:

‘Peace!’.”

In the day of resurrection, the people of Paradise will hear the word ‘Peace’ from every direction. ‘Peace’ from Allah to those whose residence is Paradise.

“Peace: a word from a Merciful Lord.”[2]

Peace from the part of the angels to the faithful:

“…Peace be on you, you shall be happy; therefore enter it to abide.”[3]

‘Peace’ from the residents of Paradise to one another:

“…their greetings therein is: ‘Peace’.”[4]

Sometime one goes somewhere by his own will, and at other times, it happens that others come along and take him to a place with some respect and particular ceremonies.

Allah, the Almighty, remarks in this noble verse: /wa ’udxila/, that is, those who are dwelling in Paradise do not enter the Paradise in a simple and usual manner. On the contrary, they will be admitted to Paradise with particular respect and ceremonial gestures.

The verse says:

“And those who believed and did righteous deeds will be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein shall they abide forever by their Lord’s permission; their greetings therein is: ‘Peace!’.”

In the noble verse 73 of the blissful Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, the Qur’an He also declares:

“And those who are in awe of their Lord shall be conveyed to the Garden in companies until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and the keepers of it shall say to them: ‘Peace be on you, you shall be happy; therefore enter it to abide’.”

As for those who are residents of Hell, we read that they direct them towards the chastisement while they are being tortured:

“Lay hold on him, then put a chain on him.”[5]

There are various streams running in Paradise:

A- Streams of water

“…In it are rivers of water incorruptible…”[6]

B– Streams of milk

"...rivers of milk of which the taste never changes..."7

C– Streams of wines with the nature of Paradise:

"...rivers of wine, a joy for the drinkers..."8

D– Streams of honey:

"...a river of honey, pure and clear..." 9

The dwellers of Hell resent and detest one another and curse each other, while the dwellers of Paradise greet one another and will remain constantly in the Paradise. Those paradise-dwellers are sincere and cordial with one another and they always say 'Peace' to each other. They are never involved in quarrelling nor in estrangement and ill terms.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 24

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَآءِ

24. "Have you not seen how Allah sets forth a parable? A good word is like a good tree, the roots of which are fixed and its branches are in heaven,"

A good tree and a tidy noble one has got several ensuing outcomes like: growing, bearing fruits abundantly, casting shadows and sustaining itself, and bearing fruits under all kinds of circumstances.

A monotheistic person is never stagnant and the signs of his faith constantly reveal themselves in his speech and his acts. His faith is continuous and not seasonal, and he always calls others to the faith, persuading them to act according what is allowed.

The verse says:

"Have you not seen how Allah sets forth a parable? A good word is like a good tree..."

In some Islamic quotations and in the commentaries of the Qur'an, several things as the examples of the Qur'anic term /tayyibah/ are referred to. Monotheism, faith, correct and sound ideas, heavenly leaders and their companions are among them. Of course, monotheism is a constantly- fixed principle which is inherently embedded in human nature.

"...the roots of which are fixed..."

It affects all the deeds and words as well as the thinking of man.

One can enjoy the fruits of faith at any time, anywhere, and in all of one's ups and downs.

The verse says:

"…and its branches are in heaven,"

The tree of monotheism has got fixed roots. No threats, or conspiracies, no instigators and blame as well as the despots can uproot or eradicate it.

If we find that in quotations this tree has been rendered to the Prophet (S) and his Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), it is because of this very reason that the religion of Muhammad (S) and the path of his household widens ever more as against the background of all those enemies, and it will globalize one day.

Some Traditions

10

Mul a 'Abd-ur-Rahman-ibn-'�f has been quoted as saying: take from me the correct traditions of the Prophet (S) before they are distorted and mixed with lies. I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) who said:

'I am the tree (of prophecy) (T�b a) and Fatimah is its trunk, Ali is its seed, Hassan and Hussayn are its fruits. The Shi'ites of us (our followers) are its leaves. The grass root of this tree is in the Garden of Eden, and the rest of it is in other Gardens (of Paradise).' 11

The Prophet (S) said:

"People are from different (roots of) a tree, and Ali and I are from (the roots of) a single tree." 12

The blissful Prophet (S) remarked:

"My Ahl-ul-Bayt and I are a tree in Paradise, the branches of which are in the world and whoever attached to us (took the tree by the branch), has taken a way unto his Lord." 13

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 25

تُؤْتِي أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّـهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

25. "(The good tree) yields its fruits at all times by the permission of its Lord, and Allah sets forth parables for the people that they may reflect."

The tree of faith always bears good fruits and there are no seasons for the faithful as autumn and winter.

The verse says:

"(The good tree) yields its fruits at all times by the permission of its Lord..."

The use of allegories, similes and parables are methods of the Holy Qur'an for calling the attention of the people and of reminding them.

The verse continues saying:

"...and Allah sets forth parables for the people that they may reflect."

Therefore, all is mortal except Allah and the faith in Him. And whatever is mortal cannot bear fruits forever. However, whatever is godly by nature is eternal.[14] Of course, the colour of Allah is constant and other colours will vanish.

"...and who can give a better hue than Allah?..."[15]

The tree of faith always bears fruits and a believer is under all circumstances remembering Allah (s.w.t.) and is seeking to perform his duties, whether be it in welfare or in hardship, in happiness or in disaster, in poverty or in wealth, and in time of the threat of the oppressors he will resist until the end.

At the time of propagating religion, he does not expect any returns from others. When he is adamant, he will control himself for gaining Allah's consent.[16] At the time of marriage, he trusts in Him.[17]

At the time of worship and obedience, he has intention with divine motive.[18] At the time of poverty, he does not go to the rich and is not of the flattering lot.[19] In time of conquest or defeat, he is happy throughout his campaign for he is busy performing his duties.[20]

Of course, faith in Allah, the Almighty, is like a tree the fruits of which satisfies man both in the world, and in the intermediate world, and in the Hereafter.

However, man's property and position and his children as well as other blessings of this life are like a tree which bears fruits only for a few days and in a limited way, if such property, position, etc. might even bear no fruits at all, and, therefore, they become merely his own source of spiritual torture.

Surah Al-Taubah, No. 9, verse 55 says:

"So let not their possessions and their issues astonish you; verily Allah only desires thereby to chastise them in the life of (this) world..."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 26

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِن فَوْقِ الأَرْضِ مَالَهَا مِن قَرَارٍ

26. "And the parable of an evil word is like an evil tree rooted upon the surface of the earth; it has

naught of stability."

The Arabic word /'ijti a/ mostly signifies uprooting and eradication. The words, ideas and deviant individuals have neither got any roots, nor do they possess any fruits, flowers, beauty, perfume, perseverance, shade, and development. On the contrary, they are just thorns in the eyes of others.

At any rate, as comparative studies present one of the best ways for understanding problems, the opposite of the 'good tree', pops up in ones mind soon and is discussed as: 'the word evil and unclean' is like the evil and unclean tree which is without any roots which is up-rooted from the earth and which is thrown to one side when standing in the stormy weather and has got no stability.

It is interesting to note that the Qur'an speaks in detail about 'the good tree' while, when talking about 'the evil tree', it describes it in one short sentence and passes by it.

The verse says:

"And the parable of an evil word is like an evil tree rooted upon the surface of the earth; it has naught of stability."

This method presents a delicate way of expression which encourages man to describe all qualification of the person once he is talking about the beloved one, whereas, when talking about the detested individual, he discusses it in a very concise manner.

Imam Baqir (as) is quoted as saying that the objective in mind with regard to /šajaratin xabiah/ (the evil tree) is the Umayyads. 21

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 27

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الأَخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ

27. "Allah confirms those who believe by a firm saying in the life of the world and in the Hereafter, and Allah leaves the unjust to stray; and Allah does what He pleases."

That is, Allah provides stability for the believers, in this worldly life, because of their belief in the word monotheism and its sanctuary, so that they do not deviate and be misled from the path of the truth, making them staunch proponents lest they shall deviate from the right path in their worldly affairs which will also result in Hereafter.

Some commentators suggest: It means that Allah provides them with a living and settlement on earth, and He assists them to overcome their enemies and will place them in the Paradise in the Hereafter.

Ibn-i-'Abb as and Ibn-i-Mass'�d and the majority of the commentators are of the belief that: This verse

has been revealed to the question asked in the grave and the objective in mind is the grave once talking about the hereafter. That is, concerning the question of the grave, He fixes them over the issue of faith. Our dear Immaculate Imams have also been quoted as such.

Therefore, we read in various Islamic quotations that Allah keeps the believer stable on the line of faith once entering the grave at the time when angels ask questions regarding his identity.

This is the meaning of:

"Allah confirms those who believe by a firm saying in the life of the world and in the Hereafter..."

In some of these quotations, we have it explicitly stated the word /qabr/ (grave), while in some other quotations we read that the Satan calls on the faithful at the time of death and tries to seduce him from every direction and any side by his temptations. However, Allah does not permit him to mislead the faithful and this is the meaning of the abovementioned Qur'anic sentence.

Most of the commentators have accepted this commentary according to the quotation of the great commentator, Tabarsi, in Majma'-ul-Bayan. Perhaps, their reason is that the hereafter is no place for erroneous behaviour, nor is it a place for practice, but it is only a place for attaining the results.

However, at the time of the arrival of death, and even in the state of purgatory, which is the world that exists between this world and the Hereafter, there is the possibility of deviation more or less. It is in this circumstance that Allah's favour comes to the assistance of man in order to protect him and make him straightforward.

Anyway, in two explanatory examples in the previous verses, the state of 'faith' 'disbelief' 'a believer', 'a disbeliever' and, in general, the state of every 'clean' and 'untidy' were visualized. In this verse, the consequence of the job and the ultimate destiny of man are referred to.

First, it implies that Allah straightens and strengthens those who are believers, for their belief, their words and their ideas.

He confirms them and protects them in this world, in the purgatory where there is a possibility of deviation, and in the Hereafter, for their belief has not been a superficial one and a shaky one, and their personality has not been a hypocritical and a versatile one.

They will remain constant in their confrontation with difficulties and whims, and they will be kept clean of all scandalous flaws of character in here. Allah's endless blessings will be bestowed on them in the eternal life there.

Then, dealing with the opposite point, it says:

"...and Allah leaves the unjust to stray; and Allah does what He pleases."

We have repeatedly asserted that wherever, in the Qur'an, there is the question of leading and misleading and it is attributed to Allah, its first steps have been taken by man himself.

Allah's job is that very impact that has been created in every act, and also Allah's job is bestowal of blessings or withdrawal of blessings that are designated by Him as a consequence of a person's suitability or his lack of worth.

1. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 42
2. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 58
3. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 73
4. The verse under discussion
5. Surah Alhaqah, No. 69, verse 30
6. Surah Muhammad, No. 47, verse 15
7. Ibid
8. Ibid
9. Ibid
10. Fad a'il-ul-Khamsah, vol. 1 p. 172 from the Mustadrak-us-Sahihaynn, vol. p. 760
11. Fada'il-ul-Khamsah, vol. 1, p. 172 take from Mustadrak-us-Sahihayn, vol. 3, p. 160
12. Fad a'il-ul-Khamsah, vol. 1, p. 172, taken from Kanz-ul-Hagh a'igh, p. 155
13. Fad a'il-ul-Khamsah, vol. 1, p. 172, taken from Thakh a'ir-ul-'Uqb a, p. 16
14. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 96
15. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 138
16. Surah ' Al-i-'Imr an, No. 3, verse 134
17. Surah An-N�r, No. 24, verse 32
18. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 162
19. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 24
20. Surah Al-Taubah, No. 9, verse 52
21. Tafsir Majma'-ul-Bayan

Section 5: The Ingratitude of Men to Allah's Bounties

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verses 28 - 29

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَي الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْراً وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا وَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ

28. "Have you not seen those who changed Allah's favour for ingratitude, and caused their people to alight into the abode of perdition?"
29. "Hell! They shall enter into it; and (what) a bad place it is!"

It is the Prophet (S) who is being addressed in this verse and, in fact, it is a depiction of one of the aspects of 'evil tree' pointed out here.

At first, the Qur'an implies whether you did not see those who converted Allah's blessings and gratitude into ingratitude and sent themselves ultimately to the land of annihilation. Such people are the roots of the 'evil tree' and are the pioneers of paganism and deviation.

The verse says:

"Have you not seen those who changed Allah's favour for ingratitude, and caused their people to alight into the abode of perdition?"

Commentators have sometimes commented this blessing as the existence of the Prophet (S) and, at other times, they have considered it to be Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) and the ungrateful ones of this blessing to Umayyads, or to Bani Muqayrah and, at times, they have introduced all the unbelievers who were contemporaries of the Prophet (S).

Yet, definitely, the meaning of the verse is extensive and covers a wide range, thus one cannot confine it to a certain group. It embraces all of those who have been ungrateful with respect to one of the blessings of Allah and have misused it.

The pagans and the unbelievers converted the great blessings of Allah into a matter of ingratitude.

A- They took the option of paganism instead of the blessing of monotheism.

B- They abandoned the blessing of the clean and pure inherent nature and imitated their seduced ancestors.

C- They preferred superstitions to the Divine revelation.

D- They expressed their lack of gratitude in face of the blessing of the Divine leaders and followed the despots.

Many quotations indicate that the Imams (as) of Shi'ites have remarked:

"By Allah, we are the blessing of Allah that He bestowed upon His servants." [1]

In other words, it means: Swearing to Allah: the blessings which were converted were our existence. The folks abandoned us and went in search of other leaders. Thus, they changed the blessing of Allah.

The Qur'an, later, comments on the Qur'anic phrase: /d ar-ul-baw ar/ (a bad place) as: It is Hell in the flames of which they will immerse, and it is the worst of all places for someone to settle, for its ultimate end is annihilation.

In other word, they invite their people to oppose against the Prophet (S), throwing them into the Hell Fire, and what an evil abode is Hell.

The verse says:

"Hell! They shall enter into it; and (what) a bad place it is!"

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 30

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَندَاداً لِّيُضِلُّوا عَن سَبِيلِهِ قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَي النَّارِ

30. "And they set up (idols as) equals to Allah that they might mislead (the people) from His path. Say: 'Enjoy yourselves, for verily your journey's end will be the Fire'."

Some consider equal partners for Allah in the course of the creation of the world. Others consider equal partners for Allah in connection with His blessings. Such people consider enjoying good health, knowledge, power, splendour, and property as of the outcome of their own ability, and or as the result of different powers. Nonetheless, they soon find out that they have gone astray.

Therefore, the Qur'an alludes to one of the worst cases of ingratitude in this verse, and says:

"And they set up (idols as) equals to Allah that they might mislead (the people) from His path..."

They do all these things so as to make the people deviate from thinking about the true path and, as a result, they enjoy their material life, and presiding over and governing the people also for a few days.

Then the verse, addressing the Prophet (S), implies that he should tell them to enjoy themselves out of this worldly life which is worthless. However, they must know that the ultimate objective of their job will direct them towards the hell-fire.

The verse says:

"...Say: 'Enjoy yourselves, for verily your journey's end will be the Fire'."

Notwithstanding such a life is not a true life; it is rather a misery, and such a presidency and governorship is of no value, but, in its real sense, it is deceit, disaster, and affliction.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 31

قُل لِّعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلاةَ وَيُنفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرّاً وَعَلاَنِيَةً مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لاَّ بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلا خِلالٌ

31. “O’ Prophet! Say to My servants who have believed, to perform the prayers and to spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them, secretly and openly, before the coming of a Day in which there shall be neither bartering nor befriending.”

Openly spending out of the wealth may encourage the present generation, and cause the encouragement of others, and self-acquittal from all accusations, while secretly spending out of the wealth is the cause of development and sincerity.

Some commentators, of course, have claimed that overt spend relates to the obligatory giving away of the wealth, like Khoms (one fifth) and alms, while secretly giving away of it relates to the recommended cases, such as: charity.

Although each of the open and in secret giving away of the wealth exerts some impacts on others, nonetheless, one can perhaps say that to give away part of the wealth in secret is better, for the Qur’anic term /sirran/ (secretly) precedes the word /‘al anyatan/ (openly) in this verse.

Explanations

1- In order to command others, respect their personalities first. Serving as subservient to Allah provides the believers with a medal of honour.

The verse says:

“O’ Prophet! Say to My servants...”

2- Having mere faith in the bottom of one’s heart is not sufficient. Prayers, giving away of one’s wealth, and good deeds are also necessary.

The verse says:

“...who have believed, to perform the prayers and to spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them...”

3- Islam is a comprehensive religion. One’s relationship with Allah (s.w.t.), along with one’s assistance to the deprived, are coupled with each other and are required for the acceptance of both.

“...to perform the prayers and to spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them...”

4– Spending out is not only confined to wealth alone. One must often share whatever he has with others, whether they are knowledge and wealth, or prestige and power.

5– Giving away of the wealth must be out of one’s allowed earnings and wealth, and not out of whatever wealth we have.

Allah said:

“We have provided them”

and He did not say: “*with you*”

6– The act of spending out of the wealth must sometimes be done in secret and sometimes openly.

It says:

“...secretly and openly...”

7– One must take the opportunity.

The Qur’an remarks:

“...before the coming of a Day...”

8– If you wish to have good trade, try to barter and have transactions with Allah, for there will be no transactions carried out in the Day of Resurrection.

It continues saying:

“...in which there shall be neither bartering...”

9– One cannot get away from the punishment with bribing and his special relationships on in the Day of Resurrection.

The verse remarks:

“...there shall be neither bartering nor befriending.”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 32

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَاَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقاً لَّكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الاَنْهَارَ

32. “Allah is He Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down water from the sky; then

brought forth fruits with it to be sustenance for you; and He has made the ships subservient to you that they might run through the sea by His command; and He has made the rivers subservient to you."

The issue of 'water' is being discussed in this noble verse from three dimensions:

1- Rain-water by which irrigation of the plants, source of their life, and purification of the weather are provided.

2- Sea-water which provides the water required for the life of the sea animals, and which also provides water ways for the passage of ships, and is the source of clouds and rain.

3- Canal waters which provide an irrigation system for regions lacking water.

In the previous verse, the Qur'an made allusions to prayers and sharing of one's wealth with others. In this verse, it asserts: Why are you so neglectful in connection with spend despite the fact that Allah has provided you with everything?

The holy verse says:

"Allah is He Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down water from the sky; then brought forth fruits with it to be sustenance for you; and He has made the ships subservient to you that they might run through the sea by His command; and He has made the rivers subservient to you."

The Arabic term /tasxir/ denotes both utilization of all interests, such as the making subservient of the sun and the moon, and in the sense of man's full domination, such as making the ships and canals subservient to him.

In the end, cognition of Allah's blessings is the best method for theology which is coupled with general understanding and the public love, motives and worship. Among entire blessings of Allah, water is one of the most important of them.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 33

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَآئِبَيْنِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ

33. "And He has made the constantly moving sun and the moon subservient to you, and He has made the night and the day subservient to you."

The Qur'anic term /d a'ibin/ is derived from the word /da'b/ which means a 'continuous habit'. Maraghi has mentioned in his commentary that /d a'ibin/ means 'those continues in moving'.

Certainly, the sun is a great power house which functions constantly, as contrary to the man-made power plants which require repair every now and then and close down at times. Once the sun disappears for sometime, what will then happen?

How will man's life and the life of the plants and animals terminate or come to an end? In face of the existence of numerous microbes and lack of heat and steam, what kind of catastrophe would await the world?

Allah not only conquered and made the existing beings subservient to you but He also made the constantly moving sun and moon subservient to you.

The verse says:

"And He has made the constantly moving sun and the moon subservient to you..."

Allah not only made the existing beings of this world subservient to you but He also made their accidental states as submissive to you in the same way He did with the day and night.

From the Qur'an's point of view, man is so splendid that all these beings are made submissive to him by the command of Allah. That is, either they are directly at the service of man's interest, or they are running by man's control.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 34

وءَاتَاكُم مِن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لاَ تُحْصُوهَآ إِنَّ الإِنسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ

34. "And He has given you whatever you have asked Him; and if you count Allah's blessings, you are unable to number them. Verily, man is very unjust, very ungrateful."

We read in verse 18 from Surah An-Nahl

"And if you count Allah's blessings, you are unable to number them. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

In the previous verses, we read that the corrupt leaders direct and lead people towards persons or objects other than Allah:

"And they set up** (**idols as**) **equals to Allah..."[2]

This verse proclaims: despite the fact that the ones other than Allah are unable to do anything, and whatever one possesses belongs to Allah alone, but man is usually heedless in these respects and is ungrateful in these connections.

In the meantime, the Arabic term /'add/ signifies counting, and the term /'ihs a'/ means 'to count accurately in such a way that nothing is left over in the process'. Anyway, if one decides to count Allah's blessings, he can never do that, for the material and spiritual blessings provided by Allah are so widespread throughout our lives, and our environment which can never be counted.

The verse says:

"And He has given you whatever you have asked Him; and if you count Allah's blessings, you are unable to number them. Verily, man is very unjust, very ungrateful."

Nonetheless, despite all those favours and Divine grace, mankind is still oppressive and ungrateful for Allah's blessings. The blessings which if utilized properly can turn the entire world into a paradise-like garden.

In fact the Qur'an implies: O' man! Everything is at your disposal in sufficient quantities but on condition that you are not ungrateful and oppressive, while you should try to remain content with your lot and with your own rights and do not violate the rights of other people.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayan
2. The current Surah, verse 30

Section 6: Abraham's Prayer

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 35

وإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ ءَامِناً وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَن نَّعْبُدَ الاَصْنَامَ

35. "And (remember) when Abraham said: 'My Lord, make this city secure and distance me and my children from worshipping the idols'."

This verse and the following verses exhibit a profile and the content of the prayers of 'Ibrahim (as) which reflect his burning desire for Allah and his greatness in spirit and, perhaps, this is the reason why this Surah has been named Surah 'Ibrahim.

'Ibrahim (as) prayed for Mecca on two occasions: The first instance was when he settled Ishmael and Hajar there and asked Allah to make that city secure.[1]

The verse says:

"And (remember) when Abraham said: 'My Lord, make this city secure…"

The second occasion that he prayed for Mecca was when a multitude of people came to Mecca to settle down there. 'Ibrahim (as) prayed saying:

"…'My Lord, make this a secure City…"[2]

Question: Are all of the people of the generation of 'Ibrahim monotheists because of this prayer?

Answer: Prayers present one factor and the will of the children provides another factor. Let us not forget the story of Noah's son.

Question: How is it that 'Ibrahim (a. s.) recalled Mecca as a town while he refers to it in the following verses "as a valley without cultivation?'[3]

Answer: The state of township of Mecca returns to the time when the tribes arrived in that region, in which case the prayer also relates to that time, or we might say that if a region is aRidand without cultivation, this would not make it incompatible with becoming a township. At the present moment, Mecca is also in a region which is arid in general.

Question: Notwithstanding the fact that Abraham (as) was a champion of monotheism, why is it that he prayed to Allah to distance him from paganism? The verse in this regard continues saying:

"…and distance me and my children from worshipping the idols."

Answer: The Prophet of Islam (S) also was constantly having his steps in the Straight Path and was heading in the straightforward direction. Nonetheless, he used to say in every prayer:

"Guide us (O' Lord) on the Straight Path."

That is, if one is even sure that he is heading in the right direction, he must be scared of the dangers of deviation either and must seek Allah's assistance.

The objective in mind of 'to make security' is a law which guarantees the security of Mecca, and not to the matter that Mecca has always been safe and secure throughout its history. For, Mecca has been repeatedly invaded by hostile forces and immense blood has been shed there.

The Prophet of Islam (S) and his companions were also tortured there, and Imam Hussayn (as) abandoned the Hajj rituals because of lack of security of Mecca. Nevertheless, the Divine law has designated it as a safe and secure region.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 36

رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ أَضْلَلْنَ كَثيراً مِنَ النَّاسِ فَمَن تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

36. “My Lord, verily, they (idols) have misled many of the people. Then, whoever follows me, he is definitely of me, and whoever disobeys me; then verily you are Forgiving, Merciful.”

Question: How is it that the idols, which are statues of stone and wood, can mislead man?

Answer: Firstly, the idols are not always inanimate objects. Sometimes, men and those who are despots also become idols. Secondly, sometimes ignorance of a people causes stone and wood to be turned into valuable and precious commodities. Thirdly, the issue of the art involved in the jewelry, which was carried along with the idols, was attractive.

If we interpret this noble verse along with the previous one, we obtain desirable conclusions, for we had it in the previous verse that ‘Ibrahim (as) said:

“My Lord! ... distance me and my children from worshipping the idols”.

In this verse he says:

“...whoever follows me, he is definitely of me...”

Therefore, all the monotheists of the world are the scholastic children of ‘Ibrahim by ideology.

The Qur’an says:

“...The faith of your father, ‘Ibrahim...” 4

And as the blissful Prophet (S) said:

“Ali and I are the fathers of this Ummah.”

However, if a pagan is even the son of a prophet, he will also be addressed:

“...O’ Noah! Verily he is not of your family...”5

Hadrat Ali (as) remarks:

“Verily, the friend of Muhammad (S) is he who obeys Allah though he may be distanced by his blood. And verily the foe of Muhammad is he who disobeys Allah though he might be near to him (S) by his blood.” 6

Incidentally, there is a scholastic and an ideological relationship between the celestial leaders and the

faithful people. It is for this reason that the prophets (as) were even compassionate with their own opponents and they never disappointed them.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 37

رَبَّنَآ إِنِّي أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِندَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلاَةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُم مِنَ الَّثمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

37. "Our Lord! Verily I have settled (a part) of my offspring in a valley without cultivation near Your Sacred House, in order, Our Lord! that they may establish prayer; therefore, make the hearts of some people yearn towards them, and provide them with fruits so that they may be grateful."

When Allah bestowed Ishmael to Abraham in his old age, He commanded him to settle that child with his mother in Mecca. Abraham obeyed the Divine order and then he prayed for them.

Some Islamic quotations denote that Imam Baqir (as) said:

"We are the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the remaining descendents of Abraham. That is why the people's hearts are inclined towards us."

Then, he recited this verse:

"Our Lord! Verily I have settled (a part) of my offspring in a valley without cultivation..."

The Ka'bah was located in a desert with no water and vegetation so that the people might be tried by it. As Hadrat-i-Ali (as) declared in the sermon of Ghasiyah:

"If the Ka'bah were situated in a place with a good climate, the people would not go on a pilgrimage toward it for the sake of Allah."

The call and prayers of the prophets (as) are accepted.

Abraham in this verse says:

"...and provide them with fruits..."

In another verse Allah says:

"...a safe, sacred territory to which fruits of every kind shall be drawn?..."[7]

Imam Baqir (as) has stated:

“Whatever fruits are found in the east or in the west of the world can be found in Mecca”.

However, Abraham (as) continued with his prayers and his invocation as follows:

“Our Lord! Verily I have settled (a part) of my offspring in a valley without cultivation near Your Sacred House, in order, Our Lord! that they may establish prayer…”

Afterwards, when Allah bestowed a son on Abraham from his female-slave, Hajar, and called him Isma‘il, his first wife’s jealousy, Sarah, was provoked and, she could not tolerate Hajar and her son. She asked Abraham to take that mother and child to another place, and Abraham submitted to this request which was in accordance with Allah’s command.

Ishmael and his mother, Hajar, were taken by him to the land of Mecca which was then an arid land, lacking everything in those days. He left them there and said Good-bye to them.

Then Abraham continued his prayer to Allah implying that: Now that they have settled down in this extremely hot desert for the respect of Your great house, persuade some people to pay attention to them heartily, and have affection for them.

Let them enjoy all kinds of fruits, whether material or spiritual, perhaps they might be grateful to you.

The verse continues saying:

“…therefore, make the hearts of some people yearn towards them, and provide them with fruits so that they may be grateful.”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 38

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِي وَمَا نُعْلِنُ وَمَا يَخْفَي عَلَي اللَّهِ مِن شَيْءٍ فِي الأَرْضِ وَلاَ فِي السَّمَآءِ

38. “Our Lord! Verily, You know whatever we hide and whatever we manifest, and nothing in the earth nor anything in the heaven is hidden from Allah.”

Now that everything is obvious for Allah (s.w.t.), and His knowledge encompasses everything and every affair of us, we, therefore, must not commit sin in His presence and not interfere in His creatures except with His satisfaction and His commands. We must remain sure that nothing will be hidden from Allah on the earth and in the skies.

The verse says:

“Our Lord! Verily, You know whatever we hide and whatever we manifest, and nothing in the earth nor anything in the heaven is hidden from Allah.”

And Abraham invokes Allah declaring that once I am in distress for being parted from my son and wife, You know that well, and in case a drop of tears is shed from my eyes You notice.

And if at the time of my separation from my wife she tells me: “*Whom do you appoint as my guardian?*” You are aware of all these things, and the future of this land as well as the future of them, which are interwoven with one another, are all transparent and crystal clear before You and Your knowledge.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 39

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

39. “Praise be to Allah, Who has granted me in old age Ishmael and Isaac. Verily my Lord is the Hearer of the petition;”

Ishmael and Isaac are among the specific blessings of Allah, for:

1- They were born because of the prayers of the prophet of Allah, ‘Ibrahim.

2- They were born during the old age of their father.

3- They were both righteous children.

4- They headed their following chain of prophets.

Incidentally, what is important is the issue of having righteous children, whether they are born by a female slave or else. (Ismael was born by a female slave and Ishaq was born by a free woman.)

At any rate, one’s children are gifts from Allah and nothing deters or serves as a hindrance for Allah’s Will and the Divine power; therefore, senility did not obstruct him from having children.

The verse says:

“Praise be to Allah, Who has granted me in old age Ishmael and Isaac. Verily my Lord is the Hearer of the petition;”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verses 40 - 41

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلاَةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

40. “My Lord! Make me a performer of the prayer, and of my offspring (too): Our Lord! and accept my petition”

41. “Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and the believers on the Day when the reckoning shall come to pass.”

Through the verses which we have discussed so far in this Surah, Abraham (as) has seven wishes from Allah (s.w.t.).

They consist of: the security of Mecca, remaining distant from worshipping idols, winning the heart of the faithful with regard to his children and his school of thought, benefiting of his offspring from the fruits and the dividends, the success in keeping up his prayers, acceptance of his call and his prayers, and finally, forgiveness of himself, his parents and all the faithful.

The Arabic term /w alid/ refers to one’s real father, but the term /’ab/ has a wider sense and refers also to other than father, such as uncle and one’s father-in- law as well. As the parents of Abraham (as) were believers, therefore, Hadrat-i-’Ibrahim (as) prays for them in this verse.

The verse says:

“My Lord! Make me a performer of the prayer, and of my offspring (too): Our Lord! and accept my petition”

Nonetheless, in other verses where the Arabic word /’ab/ is employed the objective in mind is ‘Ibrahim’s uncle. Hadrat-i-’Ibrahim deplored and abhorred him for his paganism.

Messages to Note

1- The repetition of the Qur’anic word /rabb/ at the beginning of the prayers of Abraham (as) is the sign of the impact of the acceptance of prayers, or it may also be regarded as one of the rituals belonging to it.

2- Establishing prayer is the center of Abraham’s calls.

3- Keeping up prayers is a counterpart for leadership. Abraham employed the phrase /wa min �uriyyati/ (and of my offspring) on two occasions: One is when there was the issue involved as of the prayers of his generation, and the other one concerned with the leadership of his generation.

Here he (as) says:

“Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and the believers on the Day when the reckoning shall come to pass.”

1. The verse under discussion

2. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 126
3. The current Surah, verse 37
4. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 78
5. Surah H□d, No. 11, verse 46
6. Bih ar, vol. 67, P. 25
7. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 57

Section 7: The Respite and the End

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 42

وَلا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلاً عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الأَبْصَارُ

***42. “And do not regard Allah to be heedless of what the unjust do. He only respite them** (**their punishment**) **to a day on which the eyes shall stare** (**of terror**),”*

The previous verses dealt with the issue of the day for settlement of accounts. For this reason, the Qur’an points out the case of the plight of the oppressors and the tyrants in this verse.

Incidentally, by means of the Qur’anic statement of this part of the discussions of resurrection, the sections on the issue of monotheism of the previous discussions are complemented.

At first, with a threatening tone of voice while addressing the oppressors and the tyrants, the Qur’an begins implying that the Prophet (S) should not rest assured that Allah is ignorant of whatever the oppressors do.

The verse says:

“And do not regard Allah to be heedless of what the unjust do…”

These are the words, in fact, uttered in answer to the query of those who say: If this world has got a Lord, a just Lord, so why the oppressors are left to themselves? The Qur’an answers this question by saying that Allah is never ignorant.

If He does not punish them instantly, it is for the fact that this world is a trial ground only and it is meant for the development of human beings, and achieving this objective is impossible without freedom.

Then the Qur’an implies that Allah postpones their punishment for one day when on that day all are stunned with their eyes amazed because of intensive fear and terror, and are fixed to one points

remaining motionless.

The verse says:

"...He only respite them (their punishment) to a day on which the eyes shall stare (of terror),"

Moreover, He declares in other verses as such:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance verily for him is a life straitened..."1

It is besides that Allah in another verse adds that such people will be afflicted in this world, too, where he says:

"And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought..." 2

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 43

مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمْ لاَ يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ وَأَفْئِدَتُهُمْ هَوَآءٌ

43. "Hastening forward, their heads upraised, their eyes (and eyelids) not blinking and their hearts void."

There are several meanings proposed for the Arabic term /muhti'in/ which is derived from /'iht a'/ in the sense of: upraising the head, to speed up, looking pleasurably, all of which meanings can be implied in this verse.

The chastisements of the Resurrection Day are so horrifying that these oppressors stiffen their necks, raising their heads towards the sky, they even may fix their eye-lids in a state of motionlessness, while their hearts are becoming void because of their intensive fear, distress, anxiety and despair.

The verse says:

"Hastening forward, their heads upraised, their eyes (and eyelids) not blinking and their hearts void."

Those persons who considered themselves as think tanks and considered others as stupid will lose their reasoning in such a way that their looks resemble not the lunatics but that of the dead. Their looks will be 'empty', indifferent, motionless and full of fear and horror.

Truly speaking, once the Qur'an decides to depict a scenario or a landscape, it depicts every thing in the most concise manner and provides the most comprehensive picture of everything, an example of which is shown in the above short verse.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 44

وَأَنذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ فَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رَبَّنَآ أَخـّرْنَآ إِلَي أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ الرُّسُلَ أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوا أَقْسَمْتُم مِن قَبْلُ مَا لَكُم مِن زَوَالٍ

44. “And warn the people as to the day when the chastisement comes to them; then those who did injustice will say: ‘Our Lord, defer us to a near term, (***that***) ***we will answer Your call and follow the messengers’.*** (***They will be told:***) ***‘Did you not swear before that there would be no end for you?’”***

The Qur’anic term /’in ar/ (warning) is the antonym of /biš arat/ (glad tidings) both of which were the mission of the prophets who were the bearers of the good news as well as the warners.

They were bearer of the good news regarding faith, righteous acts, virtue, and being characterized by attributes which lead one to salvation, happiness, Divine blessings, and ushering one to Paradise.

And they were warners as to the cases of paganism, ingratitude, darkness, sins, and evil attributes and characteristics which lead one to wretchedness misery, Divine Wrath, and awful consequences and punishments in this world and in the Hereafter.

Then, in order not to give impression that the Divine punishments are confined to a specific group, as a general rule He commands His prophet to warn all people about the day when the painful chastisement of Allah will call on them.

The verse says:

“And warn the people as to the day when the chastisement comes to them…”

That is, when the tyrants notice the terrible consequences of their behaviour, they may regret and think of compensating for it.

The verse continues saying:

“…then those who did injustice will say: ‘Our Lord, defer us to a near term, (***that***) ***we will answer Your call and follow the messengers’…”***

The objective of this day is the day when some calamities and worldly chastisements will be descended, just like the punishments which were inflicted on the peoples of L t, and on ‘ Ad, and Tham d people as well as on the Pharaoh people which exterminated them.

However, they are instantly held back and this shaking message is delivered to them that such a thing is impossible to happen. The course of action has come to an end. Were you not the ones who swore that

there would be no end and perishing of your life and power?

The verse says:

“...(They will be told:) ‘Did you not swear before that there would be no end for you?’”

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 45

وَسَكَنتُمْ فِي مَسَاكِنِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ الأَمْثَالَ

45. “And you dwelt in the abodes of those who did injustice to themselves oppression on yourself in the houses of those who preceded you, and it became clear for you how we did with them, and We set forth (may) parables for you.”

Many people do not take examples and instructions from those who preceded them and neglected everything though they are seating themselves in their seats.

Therefore, to warn and to blame them further, the Qur’an addresses them implying that you were such people who settled down in the lands of those who refuted the prophets and you knew as to how Allah had inflicted catastrophes on them and had exterminated them.

The verse says:

“And you dwelt in the abodes of those who did injustice to themselves oppression on yourself in the houses of those who preceded you, and it became clear for you how we did with them...”

Some are of the opinion that they were the people of ‘ Ad, and Tham�d, while others claim that they were those who were killed in the Battle of the Badr.

We provided you examples and made you acquainted with the characteristics of your predecessors so as to enable you to take example, but you did not draw lessons, and admonitions did not have any impacts on you.

The verse says:

“...and We set forth (may) parables for you.”

Some suggest that the objective of the parables which are mentioned is those matters which are dealt with in the Qur’an and demonstrate that Allah is Omnipotent in the world of creation as before, and is able to re-enliven all after their death, and to reckon their accounts.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 46

وَقَدْ مَكَرُوا مَكْرَهُمْ وَعِندَ اللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَإِن كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ

46. “And indeed they have devised their devising, and their devising is with Allah, though their devising were such as to remove the mountains thereby.”

Allah is both aware of their devices and tricks, and is all–powerful over them, and He shall provide all conspirators with commensurate chastisement. He can also diffuse and expel their tricks or return those tricks to themselves.

At any rate, do not worry, such conspiracies and plans will have no effect on you even if their strategies are such that enable them to remove mountains. For, no matter how powerful and forceful they may be, the oppressors will eventually be perished by Allah.

The verse says:

“And indeed they have devised their devising, and their devising is with Allah, though their devising were such as to remove the mountains thereby.”

Some commentators have claimed that the objective in mind of ‘the mountains’ has been the Islamic religion and the Prophet (S) that have withstood all sorts of conspiracies and tricks of the enemies.

Surah ‘Ibrahim – Verse 47

فَلا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِ رُسُلَه إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

47. “So do not think that Allah will fail in His promise to His messengers. Verily Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution.”

As a man takes revenge, he does it along with hatred and instinctive satisfaction. Nevertheless, what Allah does is based on justice and wisdom.

Therefore, addressing the prophet (S) once again, as to warn the oppressors and evildoers with a threatening voice, it implies that they should not imagine that Allah opposes His earlier promise and pledge which He has kept with the prophets.

For, that kind of person violates his promise who is either not able to keep his promise or he has not included such words in his vocabulary as punishment or vengeance. However, Allah is both able and can take vengeance.

The verse says:

"So do not think that Allah will fail in His promise to His messengers. Verily Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution."

This noble verse is in fact complementary to the verse which we already cited, saying:

"And do not regard Allah to be heedless of what the unjust do..."[3]

That is, if you notice that the oppressors have got a respite, it is not because of Allah's negligence and overlooking of their acts, and it is not for that Allah may violate His promise. Rather, all of their accounts will be settled and cleared in a day and their just chastisement will be given to them.

Incidentally, the respite given to the pagans and the oppressors is based on a practice and on wisdom, and it is not because of negligence and of going back on one's promises.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 48

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

48. "On the day when the earth shall be changed into other than the earth and (***so will be***) ***the heavens, and*** (***all men***) ***shall come forth before Allah, the One, the All-Dominant."***

The changing and the transformation of the earth on the Hereafter Day has been explained in a number of verses of the Qur'an. On that Day, a strong earthquake will take place; the mountains will be displaced and start moving and they will be softened like wool and cotton. It refers to the day when the earth will be turned into a soft piece of plain which is even.

As the Qur'an says:

"And they ask you (***O Apostle***) ***about the mountains*** (***on that Day***)***. Say: 'My Lord will uproot them and scatter them*** (***as dust***)***,'"***

"Then He will leave them as a plain, smooth level;"[4]

But, the transformation of the skies will take place with the setting off the sun and the rolling over of the skies. However, this existing system of existence has got a culmination point.

Anyway, after destruction, everything will be reborn and renewed on that Day and man will step forward with some new conditions of the world, the conditions of which differ from these of this world, as regards its vastness, its blessings, its chastisements.

And it is on that Day that one appears with all of his existence and with all of his possessions before the

Allah Who is unique and Almighty.

The verse says:

"On the day when the earth shall be changed into other than the earth and (***so will be***) ***the heavens, and*** (***all men***) ***shall come forth before Allah, the One, the All-Dominant."***

Therefore, the attribute of Allah as 'the All-Dominant' signifies His domination over everything and His authority over what is inside and what exists in the outside of every single being.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verses 49 - 50

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِي الأَصْفَادِ

سَرَابِيلُهُم مِن قَطِرَانٍ وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ

49. "And you will see the guilty on that day bound together in chains."
50. "Their robes (***shall be***) ***of pitch, and their faces covered with Fire,"***

The person who is experiencing punishment and trouble will be ever more suffering if he hears other people crying, as the case is with those who are happy and rejoicing and their happiness and rejoicing will double if they find themselves beside others who are happy as well.

It is for this reason that the Qur'an declares that: Allah will bring together all those individuals who resemble one another in their line of thinking: the culprits in Hell and the good ones in Paradise.

And we also find that the Qur'an depicts the conditions of the offenders in a different way in this verse.

It says:

"And you will see the guilty on that day bound together in chains."

These chains and yokes represent the mental and practical connections of the sinners who joined together and who were interwoven as in a line to help each other in this world.

Then, the Qur'an describes their dressing pattern which is in itself a great disaster for them. Their robes and dresses are made of tar (a stinking, malodorous, and inflammable material) and their faces are covered by flames of fire.

The verse says:

"Their robes (***shall be***) ***of pitch, and their faces covered with Fire,"***

As such is the case, instead of proper clothing, their bodies are wrapped up in a kind of material which has four distinct awful defects as they are stinking, black, inflammable and burnable, for robes are put on for protection as well as for ornamental and cosmetic purposes. They are meant to protect one against heat and cold. Such robes, contrast all garments, are both ugly and inflammable.

The Arabic term /'asf ad/ is the plural form of /suf□d/ which means 'the bone of a tree', it was also used for attaching to the feet of prisoners.

The Arabic term /qatr an/ is a kind of material which is extracted from some trees after the boiling of which and after its solidification. It is used for curing the skin diseases of camels for its intensive burning. It is extremely stinking and inflammable.

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 51

لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

51. "That Allah may requite everyone what he has earned, verily Allah is swift at reckoning."

None of the people will remain without compensation. And no action in the world will be left without any reactions. Thus, the Divine punishment and reward have their origin in our own practices.

The verse says:

"That Allah may requite everyone what he has earned…"

This means that Allah rewards or punishes everyone according to His own discretion for whatever he has done.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an implies that Allah is quick to discern and settle accounts.

The verse continues to say:

"…verily Allah is swift at reckoning."

Surah 'Ibrahim – Verse 52

هَذَا بَلاَغٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنذَرُوا بِهِ وَلِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَلِيَذَّكَّرَ أُوْلُوا الأَلْبَابِ

52. "This is a clear message for mankind and that they may be warned by it, and that they may know that He is God (the only) One, and that those possessors of intellects may take admonition."

As we already noted, Surah 'Ibrahim began with depicting the sensitive role of the Qur'an in bringing out man from utter darkness of ignorance and paganism into the enlightenment of knowledge and of monotheism.

It ends by providing an exposition of the role of the Qur'an in warning all human kind and instruction of monotheism and that the possessors of intellects may take admonition.

The verse says:

"This is a clear message for mankind and that they may be warned by it, and that they may know that He is God (***the only***) ***One, and that those possessors of intellects may take admonition."***

Such a beginning and such an end provide us with clues to the reality as to the fact that whatever we read about is already mentioned in the Qur'an, and as Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) says:

"The sources of all knowledge and the delight of the heart are in the Qur'an."[5]

One also has to look for the remedies of mental, ethical, social and political illnesses in the Qur'an. It has been said:

"Seek from it for the treatment of your diseases."[6]

This exposition provides us with sufficient reasons to believe that the Holy Qur'an is a Book which contains instructions for everyone throughout his life.

And 'finally' it is a Book which provides the learned man as well as the masses of people with the required instructions as they need. Once the Muslims have set aside this great celestial Book and turned to the deviant schools of thought of the east and west, they must be on the look out for the reasons of their weakness and their backwardness in here.

Explanations

1- The holy Qur'an provides the substance for religious propagation and the preachers must look to the Qur'an for the main substance of their propagation.

"This is a clear message..."

2- The Qur'an is the Book of monotheism and one must educate monotheistic people by it.

"...and that He is God (***the only***) ***One..."***

3- It is not enough to communicate only, warning is also necessary. It does not suffice to know paying attention, and admonition is also required.

4- Association with the Qur'an provides us with both knowledge, cognition, and outlook as well as with

admonitions which urge us to perform decent acts.

5- The Qur'an provides the general public with a mandate though only the men of wisdom take advice and instruction from it.

"...and that those possessors of intellects may take admonition."

Certainly, if we pay attention to the guidelines of the Qur'an heartily, we will become truly monotheistic individuals. Allah willing.

The End of Surah 'Ibrahim

You can read the biography of Hadrat-i-'Ibrahim in the following pages.

1. Surah T a H a, No. 20, verse 124
2. Surah Ash-Shur a, No. 42, verse 30
3. This Surah, verse 42
4. Surah T a H a, No. 20, verses 105-106
5. Nahj-ul-Bal aqah, sermon 176
6. Ibid

The Highly Adventurous Life of 'Ibrahim, the Iconoclastic Prophet

This Surah is the only one which is named after 'Ibrahim.

However, the biography of 'Ibrahim is not covered only in this Surah.

On the other hand, as there are mentions of this great Divine prophet on various occasions in other Suras, we considered it appropriate to discuss the highly-esteemed biography of this champion of monotheism in a concise manner at the end of this Surah so that we shall be able to interpret and comment on the various verses which we come across in the future, as they require command of this prophet's life.

We hope that this short discussion provides sufficient awareness for our dear readers and we shall be able to provide them with useful references.

One can distinguish the life of 'Ibrahim into three distinct periods:

1- The Era prior to his prophetic Mission;

2- The Era of his prophetic Mission and his Campaign against the worshippers of idols in Babylon;

3- The Exodus Era from Babylon and his struggles and efforts in the Lands of Egypt, Palestine, and Mecca.

The Birthplace and Childhood of ‘Ibrahim

‘Ibrahim was born in the lard of Babylon which was an amazing land of the world and which had a powerful and, at the same time, an oppressive and a tyrannical government which was in full control of it. (Some historians have regarded his birthplace in ‘’Ur’, a city in the land of Babylon.

The Highly Adventurous Life of ‘Ibrahim (a. s.)

‘Ibrahim was born at the time when, Nimrod-ibn-Kan‘an, that oppressive and cruel king, was ruling Babylon and he used to present himself as the great god of Babylon. Certainly, the people of Babylon did not possess only this sole idol to worship, but, in the meantime, they had fabricated idols out of the various materials and used to worship them.

The dominant government of that land used to encourage vigorously the worshipping of idols as it considered the job as an effective means for stupefying and inciting hallucinations in people and regarded any kind of insult to the idols as a great crime and an unforgivable one.

Historians have recounted an amazing story about the birth of ‘Ibrahim, a summary of which is as follows:

Astrologers had predicted and had foretold that a person could be born who would stand up to the undivided and invincible power and authority of Nimrod. Then Nimrod sought to obstruct such a baby from being born, and once it was born, he did utmost to have him killed. Nonetheless, none of his plans was effective and the baby was born.

The mother of the baby tried her best and brought her child up in a cave near her birthplace so much so that she spent 13 years of her life in that place. And in such a situation, eventually, the child was brought up far from the scrutiny of the agents of Nimr�d.

He attained the age of puberty, and decided to leave that hiding-place forever, in order to go among the people, and explain the lessons of monotheism to the people which he had received with inspirations from within himself supplemented by his mental studies.

Campaigns Against Various Groups of Idol-worshippers

At the time when the people of Babylon were worshipping such self-made idols, further, they were also worshipping such celestial beings as the sun, the moon and the stars.

‘Ibrahim decided to awaken their dormant conscience by means of logic and clear and evident reasoning methods, thus drawing the dark curtains of the wrong suggestions down from the face of their clean inherent nature, so as to enable their enlightening nature to shine, in order that they might take several steps alongside of the path of monotheism.

‘Ibrahim had done a great deal of studies concerning the creation of the universe, the skies and the earth as well as the power which was dominating and governing them and their amazing hierarchy, thus the light of certainty was being shed on his entire existence[1].

Logical Campaign Against the Idol-worshippers

At first, Abraham faced the worshippers of the stars, especially against those who used to worship Venus, which appears in the sky immediately after sunset, shining to the west of the horizon. They engaged in bowing and worshipping it.

Abraham shouted,

“***This is my Lord.***”

This he did either wonderfully, using a positive interrogation with a negative sense to stress the issue, or he used this way of expression to provide an introduction for the demonstration of their mistakes, or just for the sake of reinforcing of harmony with the opposite side in order to bring them in line.

However, when it set, he remarked:

“***I do not like those the setting ones.***”[2]

And when the moon split the widely-open horizon, inciting the moon-worshippers to begin their worship, joining them he shouted:

“***This is my Lord!***” ***But when it set, he said: ‘If my Lord does not guide me I shall surely be of the people gone astray’.”***

When the sun split the darkness of night, shedding its golden rays over the mountains and plains, the sun-worshippers went on with their prayers.

Then, Abraham said:

“This is my Lord; this is the greatest! But when it set, he said: ‘O’ my people! Surely I am quit of that you associate (***with Allah***)***’.”***

All these have got falls. They are at the mercy of change and are as puppets at the hands of creation and they have no feelings and will power of their own much less that they should be deemed as creator

and administrator of this world:

“Verily I have turned my face** (**myself wholly**) **toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being upright, and I am not of the idolaters.”[3]

‘Ibrahim left behind this stage of his campaign against the idol-worshippers in the most efficient way and could awaken some, while seeking to make others at least skeptic. He was soon subject of rumour in that region as to whom he might be who can affect masses of people’s hearts, leaving such an impact on them with such an explicit and straightforward logic.

Dialogue with ‘Azar

Abraham got engaged in a conversation with his uncle at another stage, and by using explicit and far-reaching speech coupled with affection and, at times, with warnings regarding idol-worshipping, told him: Why do you worship something which can not hear, can not see, and can not solve any problems you have?

If you follow me, I shall lead you in the right path. I am scared that soon you may face the Divine punishment if you follow the Satan.

Even, at the time when his uncle threatened him to stone him to death when he was admonishing him, he used the sentence

“Peace be upon you! Saying: I shall ask my Lord to forgive you”[4],

and he tried to find a way through his stone like heart.

The Prophetic Mission of ‘Ibrahim

As for the age when Abraham attained to the position of the prophetic mission, we have no access to clear evidence. However, we can conclude from Surah Maryam, that he had attained to the rank of his prophetic mission when he engaged in the dialogue with his uncle, for we read in this Surah addressing the prophet (S):

“And mention in the Book; verily he was a truthful man, a prophet.”

“When he said to his father** (**i.e. his uncle**): **‘O my father! Why do you worship that which neither hears nor sees, nor does avail you in aught?”[5]

We know that this adventure took place before an extensive entanglement with the idol-worshippers and his being was about to be burned by them. If we add what some historians have written saying that Abraham was only 16 years of age when setting of him a flame took place, it becomes clear that he was appointed to achieve his great mission even as early as his adolescence.

Practical Campaigns Against the Idol-worshippers

Anyway, 'Ibrahim's involvement with the idol-worshippers reached greater proportions day by day which, eventually, terminated in breaking of all the idols of temple of Babylon except the great idol.

Dialogue with the Oppressive Ruler

The affairs regarding the opposition and campaign of Abraham (as) with the idols finally reached Nimr�d. He summoned him so as to silence him by the way of advising, or by warning, or by threatening him. He, who was very advert in sophisticating, asked Abraham if he did not worship the idols, who was then his Lord?

He answered the same one whose life and death are in His own hands:

"...My Lord is He Who gives life and causes to die.'..."

He shouted: O you unaware person! This is in my hands! Do you not see how I command the offender who is to be executed to be freed, and how I stop his execution or I order the execution of the prisoner who is not convicted to be executed?

'Ibrahim, who was advert in giving extraordinary sharp answers, seeking assistance from his prophetic power, told him: It is not but the matters of death and life which are in His hands; all of the affairs of the world of existence are at His command.

Do you not see how the sun rises from the east every morning by His order and sets in the west? If you rule the entire world of existence, reverse the process, so that the sun rises in the west and sets in the east. Nimr�d was so astonished that he lost his ability to talk to him[6].

Undoubtedly, 'Ibrahim knew that Nimr�d was playing with words as regards having power of life and death. However, his skill in reasoning did not permit the enemy side to win him over in his argument. Thus he abdicated that soon and stuck to a different method in which he got the enemy caught.

The Exodus of 'Ibrahim

At long last, the government of Nimr�d, who felt that the youth was organizing a dangerous campaign threatening his despotic rule, by his clear logic and his expressive powerful tongue decided to put an end to the life of 'Ibrahim by aggrandizement of the fanatical ignorance of the idol-worshippers.

He feared that the eloquent language and powerful thinking coupled with his sound logic would awaken the oppressed masses, and finally break up the chains of his exploitations.

He then organized certain ceremonies (which will be discussed later, in Surah 'Anbiya) to burn him alive

in an inferno of fire which was prepared by the help of the ignorance of the masses and the crime of the dominant system, in order to be delivered from him for ever.

However, as the fire was put off by the command of Allah and Abraham was saved from that scenario intact, Nimr�d's system started trembling in such a way that Nimr�d lost his morale, as Abraham was no more an adventurous young man who was planting seeds of discord the labeling which Nimr�d had addressed him with.

Abraham was then regarded as a Divine leader and a brave champion who could by himself and single-handedly invade his powerful enemies and overcome them all.

It was for this reason that Nimr�d and his courtiers, who used to suck the blood of the poor people like leeches, decided to stand up against Abraham with all their powers to guarantee the safety of their regime and fight him to the end.

On the other hand, Abraham had secured his share from that group. That is, those who had receptive hearts had believed in him.

He found it more convenient to depart from the land of Babylon along with his companions and the population of the faithful and to spread the call of Allah to the people of Damascus, Palestine, and Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs. He could propagate the truth of monotheism in those regions and call numerous people to become faithful to the worshipping of Allah, the only One.

The Last Stage of the Prophetic Mission of 'Ibrahim

'Ibrahim spent a whole life-time campaigning against worshipping the idols in all its forms especially the 'worshipping of man' and could enlighten the ones who were ready with the light of monotheism and provide them with a new life, thus liberating numerous groups from the chains of the despots.

Now it was time to enter the last stage of Allah's worshipping and servitude to Him and offering Him whatever he possessed with utmost sincerity, so that to pass successfully all the great Divine trials with a great leap forward in spiritual matters which would culminate in his 'Imamate' and leader-ship' of men.

Simultaneous with this matter, he erected the pillars of the House of monotheism, 'the House of Ka'bah' and turned it into a unique center for worshipping Allah. This he did to call all the believers to this great conference near this huge and fantastic as well as splendid 'house of monotheism'.

His adventures about the jealousy of Sara, his first wife, with 'Hajar', the slave whom he had accepted as his wife and had given birth to a son called Ishmael, caused him to take the mother and infant child and depart them from the land of Palestine to the arid desert of Mecca, within those rugged mountains.

Upon Allah's command, they went to a land where not even a drop of water was to be found, in order to

pass a great test.

The discovery of the spring Zamzam, and the arrival of the tribe Jarham, who asked the permission of Hajar to dwell in that region, has got a lengthy history along with others, all of which led to the development of that land.

‘Ibrahim had asked Allah to make that area into a well-developed city and an affluent one, and attract the attention of the people on that spot where his family was residing.7

It is interesting to note that some historians have cited that when Abraham was locating the baby Ishmael and Hajar in the land of Mecca and wanted to return, calling him Hajar asked ‘Ibrahim as to who had commanded him to take them to a land where no vegetation was found and no milk-providing animals existed, and not a single drop of water was to be found, all of which took place with no storage of food and no companions.

‘Ibrahim answered her in a concise statement:

“My Lord Who has commanded me so!”

As soon as Hajar heard this response, she said:

“Now that such is the case, Allah will never leave us alone”.

Abraham repeatedly came from Palestine to Mecca to visit Ishmael and it was in the course of one of such trips during which he performed the Hajj pilgrimage rituals.

It was by the command of Allah that he took his son, who was in his teens as an extraordinary faithful and clean individual, to the sacrificing spot and got ready to sacrifice him, who was the best he had to offer Allah by his own hands.

When this most important trial was staged in its best form and he (as) went through all the processes to the end, Allah accepted the sacrifice and preserved Ishmael for him, sending him a sheep to replace his sacrifice8.

Ultimately, after all the trials and out of all tests, ‘Ibrahim attained the highest rank which a perfect man can ever reach and thus received promotion and as the blissful Qur’an implies that Allah tried ‘Ibrahim with certain words and he got through with them all, after which He told him that he was appointed as the leader and ‘Imam’.

Transported with joy, ‘Ibrahim asked that this position be awarded to some of his children as well. His call was accepted but on condition that He would not bestow such a position on those who had been oppressors or had committed any atrocities.

The holy Qur’an says:

"And (remember) when his Lord tested Abraham with words (of command) which he fulfilled, He said: 'Verily I have appointed you an Imam (leader) for mankind." (Abraham) pleaded: 'And of my offspring (as well)?' He (Allah) said: 'My covenant does not incline the unjust'."

The Highly-esteemed Position of 'Ibrahim in the Qur'an

A study of the holy verses of the Qur'an reveals the fact that Allah has appointed a very highly-esteemed position to Abraham, a rank which has been accorded to no other prophet. One can draw his conclusions as to this matter by considering the following expressions:

1- Allah has made mention of 'Ibrahim as a '***nation***' and praises his personality as a nation as well. [9]

2- Allah has accorded the position of 'Divine friend' to him.

"...And Allah took Abraham as a friend."[10]

It is interesting to note that in some quotations we read as to the commentary of this verse that: Such a high position was bestowed on Abraham for he never asked anyone anything, and he never despaired anyone who requested him something[11].

3- He was from among:

the good ones: (Surah Sad, No. 38 verse 47),

the righteous ones: (Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 123),

the content ones: (Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 125),

the truthful ones: (Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 41),

the forbearing ones: (Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 114),

and the keepers of promises: (Surah An-Najm, No. 53, verse 37)

4- Abraham was very hospitable: (Surah Ath-Thariyat, No. 51, verses 24-27);

as one finds in some quotations, he is referred to as:

'The father or the lord of the guests'[12]

5- He was unique in trusting Allah, as far as he relied on no one but on Allah in everything and under all circumstances.

He would ask Him as to whatever he wanted, and he referred only to Him.[13]

The story of the angel's proposals for his deliverance when the obstinate nation wanted to throw him into the fire and his lack of acceptance has been recorded in history books. He used to say:

"I am needy all over, but I am in need of assistance from the Creator, not from those who themselves are the created ones. [14]

6- He was unique in bravery and courage and he used to stand up against the challenging fanaticism of the idol-worshippers single-handedly, and would leave no room for the slightest fear and terror.

He used their idols as subjects of his ridicule and turned their temples into ruins, and addressed Nimr�d and his guards with a unique courage, each of which has been mentioned in several of the verses of the Qur'an.

7- 'Ibrahim had an extraordinary powerful logic. He used concise, firm, and reasonable language while addressing his seduced opponents. By his explicitly sound logic, he would bring these obstinate enemies down to earth, never losing ground to them.

He never became angry as a result of their intensive rudeness. Contrarily, he used to face them in cold blood which reflected his elevated spirit.

He used to hand them their condemnation papers with his solemn words and deeds which have been covered in the story of dispute of Abraham with Nimr�d and with his uncle and with the court trial of Babylon when they wanted to condemn him for his theistic belief and for breaking up of the idols.

Concentrate on the following verses which have been dealt with in Surah Al-'Anbiya:

When the judges asked him as to whether it was he who had done all those offences to their gods, breaking up of all their small and big idols, he answered:

*"...**surely** (**some doer**) **has done it; the chief of them is this, therefore ask them, if they can speak.**"* [15]

This he said to corner them in an awful deadlock out of which they could not escape.

He placed his opponents in an awful situation by declaring this single sentence. For, if they answered that their idols were dumb and deaf and unable to speak, they would be feeling ashamed for such of mute and irresponsible god.

If they accepted that they were able to speak, they should ask and hear the answer from them. It was on this occasion that their dormant conscience was aroused and discovered themselves.

They would hear words from within themselves which shouted that they were oppressors, selfish and tyrants. That is, you are having neither any mercy on yourselves nor do you show any mercy on the community to which you belong.

Anyway, they had necessarily had to provide an answer.

Thus, they uttered these words while being humiliated with to utmost that:

"You well know that these idols cannot speak."

It was at this moment that the pounding words of Abraham struck them like thunderbolt.

He shouted:

"Woe unto you for worshipping any one but Allah. O' brainless people! Fie on you and on what you serve besides Allah; What! Do you not understand?"[16]

Ultimately, as they did not find the power to stand up against the strong logic of 'Ibrahim in them, as is the case with all oppressors, they took to the logic of force and declared that he should be burned alive.

To fulfill their aim, they utilized the blind fanaticism of the worshippers of the idols and hastened to call them to help their gods.

"Burn him and help your gods, if you are going to do (anything)'."[17]

This was an example of the explicit, reasonable, and decisive logic of 'Ibrahim.

8- It is interesting to note that the Qur'an considers this as one of the sources of pride for the Muslims to be adherents of 'Ibrahim. And it was he who called them by the name of 'Muslims'.[18] Even, in order to encourage Muslims, the Qur'an calls to their minds that they must imitate 'Ibrahim and his companions for achieving some of the important objectives.[19]

9- The rituals of the Hajj pilgrimage, with all its splendour, have been initiated by 'Ibrahim and upon Allah's command. Therefore, the name of 'Ibrahim and the memory of 'Ibrahim have been associated with Hajj. [20]

And man is reminded of this Divine prophet at any moment and with every part of the splendid ceremonies of Hajj, so that he feels the grandeur of this man in the bottom of his heart. In principle, the performance of the Hajj rituals is meaningless without the name of Abraham.

10- The personality of 'Ibrahim was so elevated that every group sought to consider him as one of their own. The Jews and the Christians each stressed their relationship with him.

The Holy Qur'an, answering them, however, insisted that he (s.w.t.) was only a Muslim and a true monotheist. That is, he was subservient to all of Allah's commandments and submissive to Him; he never thought of anyone but Him and he never would take any steps except in the path shown by Him. [21]

1. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 76

2. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 76
3. Ibid, verses 77-79
4. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 47
5. Ibid, verses 41-42
6. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 258
7. Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verses 31-37
8. Surah As-S af at, No. 37, verses 104 to 107
9. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 120
10. Surah An-Nis a, No. 4, verse 125
11. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1. p. 74.
12. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1. p. 74
13. Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26 verses 78 to 82
14. Kamil-ibn-Athir, vol. 1, p. 99
15. Surah Al-'Anbiy a, No. 21, verse 63
16. Ibid, verse 67
17. Ibid, verse 68
18. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 78
19. Surah Mumtahanah, No. 60, verse 4
20. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 27
21. Surah 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, verse 67

Surah Al-Hijr, Chapter 15

Surah Al-Hijr (The Rock) No. 15

Revealed in Mecca

99 verses in 6 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

The Contents of Surah Al-Hijr

This Surah contains 99 verses and is generally believed to be chronologically the fifty-second Surah. It was revealed to the Prophet (S) in Mecca prior to his Migration. The Arabic term 'Hijr' is the name of a town where the people of Hadrat Salih used to live.

The name of this Surah, Al-Hijr, is taken from the eightieth verse of it which deals with the people of Salih, saying:

“And indeed the inhabitants of Hijr** (**also**) **rejected the messengers.”

Most of the discussions in this noble Surah are about the accusations and scoffs of the pagans unto the Qur’an and the blissful Prophet (S), as well as some commandments to him to be patient and perseverant with forbearance towards them.

It provided some kind of comfort and soothing effect as against the pressure exerted by the invasion of the opponents after the death of Hadrat Khadijah and Hadrat Abu-Talib , both of whom were dear to the Prophet (S).

Some of the verses deal with the origin of the world of existence, and belief in Him which are brought about by the study of the secrets of creation. The story of man’s creation, and the disobedience of Iblis, as well as his ultimate destiny, are also exposed.

There are also allusions made to the biography of such tribes as the people of Lūt, the people of Salih, and the people of Shu‘ayb.

In the meantime, there are also some verses which are concerned with the issues of Resurrection and the retribution of evildoers, each of which will be explained.

Section 1: The Qur’an Ever Protected by Allah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, The Merciful

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 1-2

الر تِلْكَ ءَايَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَقُرْءَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

رُّبَمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ

1. “Alif ‘A’, Lam ‘L’, Ra ‘R’. These are the verses of the Book and** (**of**) **a clear Qur’an** (**that makes things manifest**).**”
2. “Often will those who disbelieved wish that they were Muslims.”

We notice once again that this noble Surah begins with the abbreviated letters of Alif, Lam, Ra, which exhibit the combination of these great celestial words, that lead all men towards happiness, are made up of simple alphabetical letters, the same raw material which are at the disposal of all human beings even children aged 2 or 3 years.

This is the utmost kind of miraculous performance that such a unique feat should be produced out of such ordinary kinds of material.

Therefore, immediately next to them, it has been added:

***"Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Ra 'R'. These are the verses of the Book and** (**of**) **a clear Qur'an** (**that makes things manifest**)."*

That is: these are the verses of the celestial Book, revealed in the Qur'an, which express facts and which reveal the truth as distinguished from the untruth!

In Tafsir-i-Tabari and Majma'ul-Bayan, there has been cited a tradition implying that in Hereafter the pagans tell those Muslims who are entangled in the inferno

"*Did you also become hellish people like us, and, you were not saved by Islam?*"

While the sinful Muslims will be saved after sometime being punished, but the pagans will be remaining in the Fire of Hell for ever, saying:

"We wish we were Muslims, too."

It says:

"Often will those who disbelieved wish that they were Muslims."

Although the holy Qur'an has got a very highly esteemed position, yet it is always available for all and everybody can have access to it. At the same time, it is written in a book format and is readable by all, 'the Qur'an'.

It is for this reason that its discussions are explicit and they draw a line between right and wrong. It will be a source of credit for Islam in the future and, at the same time, it will be a source of regret for disbelievers.

Thus, those who are ridiculing Islam today, will regret tomorrow. Many a time, pagans aspire to embrace Islam, but they are involved in the affairs to the despots or entangled in their corrupt environment. Therefore, we have it in history that the Caesar of Rome decided to embrace Islam when he saw the letter of the holy Prophet of Islam (S), but he said:

"My life is in danger and my kingdom will be lost."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 3

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِهِمُ الاَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

3. "Leave them** (alone) **so that they may eat and enjoy themselves, and that they may be bemused by hope for they will soon know."

One can conclude from the Qur'anic phrase /ḏarhum/ which means leaving the pagans alone because of their own disobedience, while Allah has never left anyone alone since the beginning of creation and has sent them prophets to guide them, and this matter has been repeatedly dealt with in the Qur'an.

Therefore, Allah, the Magnificent, with a pounding tone in this holy verse, advises the Prophet implying that he (S) leaves these pagans alone so as they feed-themselves like four-footed animals and enjoy themselves out of the pleasures of this fleeting world, and their aspirations make them ignorant of this grave reality though they will soon find out.

The verse says:

"Leave them** (alone) **so that they may eat and enjoy themselves, and that they may be bemused by hope for they will soon know."

They are like animals which do not understand anything except the stable and grass and the material life, and they do not move unless they are on the look out for such things.

They are so blindfolded because of their arrogance and negligence that they are distanced from reality and engaged in their daily routine affairs which all make them unable to comprehend the real truth.

They will only understand to what extent they have been at a loss and negligence, and they will be disillusioned once they are about to see their doom in the bed of death or they are about to rise in the resurrection plain.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 4

وَمَآ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلاَّ وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَّعْلُومٌ

4. "And never did We destroy a township, but it had a known decree."

There will be an end to the joys and enjoyment of those who customarily rejoice themselves in this world, and once Allah wills, He is able to put an end to the pagans, perishing them at once.

However, it is Allah’s way of treatment to provide all with as many respites as requires and postponement of the punishment. Therefore, we must not feel rest assured of the Divine respites thus provided for us.

“And never did We destroy a township, but it had a known decree.”

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 5

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ

5. “No nation outstrips its term, nor can they postpone (it).

Allah’s way of treatment has been such under all circumstances that He has sought to provide adequate respite for reconsideration by all and for their awakening.

He sends the means to inform all through causing painful disasters to happen, and enabling all to receive blessings one after the other. He does them both: He rewards, threatens, and He warns simultaneously so that each and everyone of the people is provided with the necessary ultimatum.

However, as soon as this duration of respite expires, the unavoidable and decisive doom awaits them all.

The verse says:

“No nation outstrips its term, nor can they postpone (it).”

Notes to Be Considered

One’s fate and the calamities which ensue are of two kinds: those which are certain to happen, and those which are not so.

The deaths which are not certain to occur can be avoided by praying, giving away alms and spending in charity, and making donations as well as charitable acts. They can be altered. However, the deaths which are certain to occur are unchangeable.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 6 – 7

وَقَالُوا يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ

لَوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلآئِكَةِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

6. “And they (unbelievers) said: ‘O’ you to whom the (Divine) Reminder has been sent down, you are surely insane;”
7. “If you are of the truthful ones, why do you not bring to us the angels?”

The Arabic term /majn□n/ (insane) here does not signify ‘irrational’. Rather, that means being overtaken by ‘Jinns’, as is the case with the word ‘demoniac’ which means possessed or influenced by demons or by the spirit of the demons.

During the age of Ignorance, there was a widespread common belief that poets could compose poems because of the relationship they had with the ‘jinns’ or ‘fairies’.

In these two noble verses, cases of humiliation, ridicule, accusations, and hesitation or skepticism have been mentioned from the tongue of the pagans with respect to the Prophet (S). Employing the phrase ***‘O you to whom’*** instead of ***‘O Prophet!’*** exhibits a kind of humiliation.

The Arabic term /□ikr/ is some kind of ridicule when applied by the pagans considering the fact that they did not believe in revelations. The Arabic word /majn□n/ meaning ‘lunatic’, applied for the Prophet (S), implies accusation.

And the sentence:

“If you are of the truthful ones”

makes allusions to their skepticism regarding the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S). Moreover, the Arabic signs /’inna/ and ‘Lam’ in the sentence

“…you are surely insane”

as well as the Arabic structure of the ‘nominative clause’, all are kinds of emphasis in various ways of their speech and exhibit their deviant form of thinking.

The verse says:

“And they (unbelievers) said: ‘O’ you to whom the (Divine) Reminder has been sent down you are surely insane;”

“If you are of the truthful ones, why do you not bring to us the angels?”

Incidentally, the pagans regarded the descending of angels as the authenticity of the mission of the Prophet (S) though this was only a pretext, for, Allah elsewhere, in the Qur’an says:

“And even if We sent down the angels to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We mustered all things before them, (even then) they would not believe…”[1]

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 8

مَا نُنَزِّلُ الْملآَئِكَةَ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوا إِذاً مُّنظَرِينَ

8. "We do not send angels but with the Truth, and then they would not be respited."

One can conclude from the verses of the Qur'an that whenever a miracle is performed by one of the prophets and people are heedless about that, the divine outrage may ensue. They may also be given a respite for sometime.

However, in the cases that the kind of miracle and the request for its performance is proposed by the people, such as the coming out of the she camel from inside the mountain which the disbelievers demanded from Hadrat Salih (as), or the descending of heavenly food which was requested from Jesus (as), the Divine outrage is certain to promptly happen when the people offend and they will be given no extra respite.

It says:

"We do not send angels but with the Truth, and then they would not be respited."

In the previous verse, the pagans demanded that the Prophet (S) should descend angels for them. This noble verse provides the answer that the descending of the angels is with the Truth, which requires that they descend on the qualified people.

The descent of the angels upon the indecent individuals is for no good reasons and Allah does not do anything but with the Truth.

In other words, performing of miracles is not to be regarded as a game or plaything. On the other hand, it is for proving the truth which is adequately demonstrated for those who are seeking the truth, for the Prophet of Islam (S) has demonstrated his prophetic mission with the Qur'an and other miracles.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 9

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

9. "Verily, We Ourself have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an) and verily We, (Ourself) will be its Guardian".

According to verse 6, the unbelievers used to imply that it was not clear as to where the source of the Prophet's Reminder was.

In this noble verse, Allah says:

Stop hesitating! It is certainly We Who reveal the Qur'an and the Reminder upon him, and as the pagans used to stress the issue of insanity with regard to the Prophet (S), Allah (s.w.t.) attributes to His Own Sacred Essence the revelation of the Qur'an and its preservation. 2

The verse says:

"Verily, We Ourself have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an) and verily We, (Ourself) will be its Guardian".

According to the Allah's testimony and His pledge in this verse, no changes or distortions have occurred in the Qur'an.

In its other verses as well this meaning has been referred to, among which one may name Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 42:

"Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it..."

which signifies that: No untruth has any way into the Holy Qur'an.

In addition to Allah's pledge to the preservation of the Qur'an, Muslims have protected it from the beginning and have been earnest in its writing and preserving it.

They would even assign the instruction of the Qur'an as a dower for their wives, and designate it for a man's marriage as a pre-condition.

They used to recite or read it in their prayers, and there were a number of scribes who were the writers of the revelations, one of whom was Hadrat Ali (as).

The Imams, the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), used to call people to this very Qur'an which exists now. Moreover, the tradition of Thaqalayn, quoted from the Prophet (S), provides another proof for the authenticity of the Qur'an. Sincerely, can one claim that the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S) is constant but his Book is alterable?

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 10 - 11

وَلَقَد أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي شِيَعِ الاَوَّلِينَ

وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

10. “And indeed, We sent (***messengers***) ***before you among the nations of the ancients.”***
11. “And there came no messenger to them, but they used to mock at him.”

The Arabic term /šiya‘/ signifies ‘a nation’ or ‘a party’ which are somehow bound and related to each other, whether be it a bound which is in the path of the truth, as Surah As-Saffat, No. 37 verse 83 says:

“And verily from his party was Abraham”,

or be it in the path of the deviant, like Surah Al-’An‘am, No. 6, verse 159 which says:

“Verily those who divided their religion and became parties…”

Here, the verse says:

“And indeed, We sent (***messengers***) ***before you among the nations of the ancients.”***

The aim was the ridiculing or the damaging of the prestige of the prophets so that the truth-seeking people might not assemble around them; or their aim was to compensate for their own weaknesses in face of the logic of the prophets.

The object of their ridicule was either the simple way of life of the prophets, or that of the deprived followers of them, or the breaking up of the superstitious traditions of the people.

The verse says:

“And there came no messenger to them, but they used to mock at him.”

Anyway, ridicule and mockery has constantly been the way of the pagans as against the prophets, and such is the usual case that, whenever the weapon of logic is lacking, mockery will replace one’s weapon.

Therefore, a preacher must never feel desperate when facing the ridicules of some people.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 12 - 15

كَذَلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْـمُجْرِمِينَ

لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ سُنَّةُ الاَوَّلِينَ

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنا عَلَيْهِم بَاباً مِّنَ السَّمآءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّسْحُورُونَ

12. "Thus do We make it to enter into the hearts of the guilty."
13. "(But) they do not believe in it and such has been the way of the ancients."
14. "And even if We opened to them a gate from the sky, so that they ascended into it all the while,"
15. "They would definitely say: "Indeed our eyes have been blindfolded, rather we are a people bewitched."

In a few verses before, we had that the pagans requested the blissful Prophet (S) to bring forth angels for them to see.

Here, verse 14 proclaims that even if Allah opens a gateway to them from the sky so that they will ascend it and they will see the angels and other things, they will not yet believe in the Truth, for their request for seeing angels is just a pretext, and an obstinate fellow may also deny his own ascent to the sky, too.

Here are the verses:

"Thus do We make it to enter into the hearts of the guilty."

"(But) they do not believe in it and such has been the way of the ancients."

"And even if We opened to them a gate from the sky, so that they ascended into it all the while,"

Another verse of the Qur'an says:

"And had We sent a book down to you, written on a paper, so that they touched it with their own hands, certainly (still) those who disbelieved would have said: 'This is naught but a manifest sorcery'."[3]

Anyway, such disbelievers are so immersed in the abyss of passions, insistence, and obstinacy with respect to the 'untruth' that they if any grounds are provided for them through which they can repeatedly ascend to the sky and descend from it, they still go on saying that they have been playing magic works on them and they claim that they are a group which has been under enchantment all over, and whatever they witness is never in anyway identical with reality.

The verse says:

"They would definitely say: "Indeed our eyes have been blindfolded, rather we are a people bewitched."

It is not surprising that man reaches such heights in proportions as regards hostilities and obstinacy. For

man’s inherent nature and his untouched inner self is able to receive the factual realities and observations of the true profiles of what is real.

As a result of committing sin, having ignorance and hostility against the Truth, he will gradually adhere to what is utter ignorance and darkness. Certainly, it is possible to wipe out everything in the first stages, though once it is embedded in one’s nature, thus becoming habitual, it cannot be easily wiped out.

It is in this case that the profile of the Truth alters in man, as far as that the most rational arguments and the most explicit tangible reasons will have no impact on him, thus leading him to the denial of all the rational as well as tangible matters of life.

1. Surah Al-’An‘ am, No. 6, verse 111
2. In this short verse, there are two kinds of emphasis employed. A series of 5 emphasis are dealt with for the revelation of the Qur’an which appear in words /’in/, /n a/, /nahnu/, /nazzal/ /na�-�ikr/, and a series of 5 emphasis are found in the preservation of the Qur’an in such words as: /’in/, /n a/, /lah�/, /la/ and /h afiz�n/, which are obvious in the Arabic literature.
2- As for the lack of distortions of the Qur’an , there are hundreds of books and essays as well as researches written on the absence of any distortions in the Qur’an . However, it is most unfortunate that the Shi‘ites are unjustly held responsible for any idea of distortions, which is ascribed to them.
3- The tradition of Thaqalayn has been quoted from the blissful Prophet (S). That form which has been narrated by and among all of Islamic sects on various occasions is as follows:

“I am leaving behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things among you: The book of Allah (i.e. the Qur’an) and my progeny, my Ahl-ul-Bayt. Never these two get separated from each other, and once you take recourse to the two, you will never get astray.”

4- The Qur’an is a Reminder: “…We have sent down the Reminder…”, and turning away from the Reminder and the Qur’an will lead man astray, and, hence, causes him misfortunes:

“And whoever turns away from My remembrance verily for him is a life straitened, …” (Surah TaHa, No. 20, verse 124).

The Qur’an is a Remembrance and only by the remembrance of Allah all hearts will be comforted.

The Qur’an says:

“…Behold! By Allah’s remembrance (only) the hearts are set at rest.” (Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 28)

3. Surah Al-’An‘am, No. 6, verse 7

Section 2: Everything in the Universe Takes Place by Allah’s Command

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 16

وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَآءِ بُرُوجاً وَزَيَّنَّاهَا لِلنَّاظِرِينَ

16. "And indeed, We have established constellations in the sky and We have decorated them for the beholders,"

The Arabic term /burūj/ originally signifies 'emergence', and a woman who shows off his ornaments in Arabic is said: /taburrajat-il-mar'ah/. The Arabic term /burj/ also refers to a palace, and those high-raised buildings which present special splendours. In this verse the celestial globes, or their locations, are likened to constellations.

As the earth rotates around the sun, an imaginary circle is formed which is called 'the Zodiac'. This circle is divided into twelve equal zones within either of which certain stars are located, according to the shape of that collection of stars, it has been named to it.

In Persian, they are called as Farvardin, Ordibehesht, khordad, … and in Arabic, they are called Hamal, Sour, Jowza, Sarat an, Asad, Sunbulah, Mizan, Aqrab, Qous, Judi, Dalw and Hūt. All of these phenomena represent the power and splendour of Allah.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 17 - 18

وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَّجِيمٍ

إِلاَّ مَنِ اسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ

17. "And We have guarded them against every accursed Satan."
18. "Save him who steals the hearing, so there pursues him a clear flame."

The Arabic word /'istir aq/ is derived from /sirqat/, and thus the Arabic phrase means: 'the stealing of words'.

The commentators have raised some issues with regard to this verse; among them one may name Fakhr-i-Razi and 'Alūsi who have said in their commentaries that the objective meaning, in talking about the sky, is this same apparent sky, and the objective in mind in talking about the meteor is this same celestial stone-like objects, which are thrown down and are set in flame.

However, some other commentators have suggested that here the objective in mind, when referring to

the sky, is the 'invisible world', and the world of Truth, into which Satans have no way and permission to enter.

Here are the verses:

"And We have guarded them against every accursed Satan."

"Save him who steals the hearing, so there pursues him a clear flame."

And, regarding its meaning, perhaps one can say: We have located identification figures and leaders in the spaces of spirituality, thus protecting the truth from the temptations of Satan.

And whenever a person who has the qualities of Satan, is acting temptation, We will launch an attack on him, expelling and perishing all sorts of innovation, and eclecticism, as well as other temptations, by sound reasoning and sound logic of the true believers.

Thus, one can find the relationship between the birth of Hadrat-i-Massiah (as) and further-more, the birth of Hadrat-i-Muhammad (S) and the casting off of such Satans from the skies.

Explanations

The Satan is not only Iblis, but there are Satans.

Eavesdropping and spying are both jobs of the Satan.

A spy must be dealt with quickly and in a revolutionary manner.

"...so there pursues him a clear flame."

Wherever a Satan-like individual was to be found, the enlightening people must chase and strike him with the torch of knowledge.

The response to the Satanic acts must be provided with utmost explicitness, openness, quickness and with the maximum straight forwardness.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 19 – 21

وَالاَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْزُونٍ

وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ وَمَن لَّسْتُمْ لَهُ بِرَازِقِينَ

وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلاَّ عِنْدَنَا خَزَآئِنُهُ وَمَا نُنَزِّلُهُ إِلاَّ بِقَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ

19. "And We have spread the earth, and We have cast therein firm mountains, and We have grown in it of every thing in due balance."
20. "And We have provided means of subsistence therein for you and for him whom you are not responsible for his sustenance."
21. "And there is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down save in appointed measure."

To complement the previous discussion, the Qur'an brings here some Divine verses about the whole creation, and the symbols of Allah's splendour on the earth.

It begins with the earth at first, saying:

"And We have spread the earth..."

The Arabic term /madd/ originally means 'expansion and spreading', and most probably, it points to those parts of the land which emerged from under the water. For, as we know, the entire surface of the earth was covered hidden with water because of flood-like rains in the beginning.

Many years passed before those flood-like rains settled down in pitfalls of the earth, and parts of dry lands emerged gradually. This is the same thing which is referred to in Islamic literature as /dahw-ul-'ard/ (expansion of the earth).

And since the creation of mountains, with all the various advantages which carried with them, is considered as one of the signs of monotheism, the Qur'an refers to them, by adding:

"...and We have cast therein firm mountains..."

The Arabic term /'ilqa'/ means 'throwing or casting'. However, we know that mountains are the same ups and downs of the earth which have emerged because of the gradual freezing of the cruse of the earth or owing to the eruption of the volcanoes.

It is possible that the term /'ilqa'/ has been applied to mean as to bring into existence in this context. In our daily life, we also say that we have, for instance, developed plans for such a land and have planned several rooms in it, in which case it means that we have built those rooms.

Anyway, in addition to the fact that such mountains are inter-connected with one another from the foundations and are protecting the earth against the pressures from within which cause earthquakes, and in addition to their function of obstructing the power of the storms and breaking them, thus controlling the blowing of winds and breezes in a very exact manner, they also constitute a good place for reservoirs of water, whether be it in the form of snow or of springs.

The emphasis has especially been laid on the Qur’anic word /rawasi/, the plural of /rasiyah/ which means: ‘constant, and stationary or sustaining’, which is a delicate reference to what we discussed above, indicating that not only they are all constant themselves but also they serve as a pillar for the constancy of the crust of the earth and human life.

Then, alluding to the most important factor in human life, as well as all living creatures, that is, the plants, the holy verse continues saying:

“...and We have grown in it of every thing in due balance.”

What a beautiful and yet explicit interpretation it is to the Arabic term /mauzūn/ which is principally derived from the word /wazn/ (weight) which refers to the recognition of the quantity of everything.

It is cited in Mufrad at Raqib:

“Weight is the knowledge as to the quantity of the thing.”

This Qur’anic word refers to the exact keeping of the wonderful accounts and the measurements which are appropriate to all parts of plants, each of which has its own particles as of stems, branches, leaves, layers, seeds, and fruits.

There are perhaps hundreds of thousands of plants with various qualifications and varieties of effects the knowledge of which provides us with an outlook into the cognition of Allah, and the foliage of each leaf opens up a new chapter and presents a new volume upon the knowledge unto the Creator.

This possibility has also been forwarded that the objective of mentioning growth in this phrase is in case of various mines in mountains, because Arabs also refer to mines as /’inbat/.

In some quotations, there are also allusions made to this very meaning. A tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as) denotes:

“Someone asked him about the commentary of this verse, and he answered:

‘The objective is that Allah has created the mines of gold, silver, jewels and other metals in mountains.’”[1]

This possibility also exists that the objective of /’inb at/ (to grow) is its meaning in its comprehensive form which encompasses all of those creatures which Allah has created on the earth.

In Surah Noah, from the tongue of that great prophet the Qur’an says that he told the people:

“And Allah made you grow like a plant from the earth.”[2]

Anyway, there is no incompatibility found in case that this verse has a vast and comprehensive meaning

which includes plants, human beings and mines or the like.

As the means of life and sustenance of human beings is not confined to the plants and mines, the Qur'an refers to all such blessings in the next verse, and implies that Allah has located all means of sustenance for you within the earth.

They are available not only for you but they are there also for all living creatures as well as those which you do not procure anything for their sustenance and which are beyond your reach. Of course, Allah has been providing for all of them their requirements.

The verse says:

"And there is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down save in appointed measure."

The Arabic term /ma'ayiš/ is the plural form of /ma'išah/ which signifies one's means of sustenance after which one sometimes seeks and, at other times, they are made accessible to him.

Some commentators have interpreted the word /ma' ayiš/ into 'agriculture, plants, foods or drinks,' it seems, however, that the meaning of this word is quite comprehensive and it encompasses all means of life.

The commentators have presented two versions for the sentence 'for him whom you are not responsible for his sustenance' The first version suggests that, as we said in the above, Allah wants to explain all of His blessings with regard to the human beings as well as with regard to those animals and living beings which man cannot feed.

The other version suggests that Allah wants to make man aware of the fact that He does both, providing the means of sustenance for man, on the earth, and making available some living animals for him (like four-footed animals), which man can not feed.

It is He Who nourishes them though this job of nourishing is accomplished by him. However, we are of the opinion that the first version is more correct.

We can also base our confirmation as to the interpretation of this in a tradition adapted from the commentary book by Ali-Ibn-i-'Ibrahim, where concerning the meaning of the above mentioned sentence: he says:

"It means: 'We predetermined something for each of the animals'." 3

In the last verse under discussion, the Qur'an deals with the answer to the query which is raised by many people. That is, why is it that Allah does not provide adequate means of sustenance with all the people so as to free them from all kinds of struggling?

Allah answers:

"And there is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down save in appointed measure."

Therefore, such is not the case that Allah's power is limited and He should be terrified by the case of running short of supplies. However, the stores and reservoirs as well as stocks of this world have got its proper book-keepings, and the means of sustenance are descended from His side in carefully measured and calculated proportions.

Elsewhere in the Qur'an we read:

"And if Allah should amplify the provision for His servants, they would certainly revolt in the earth; but He sends it down according to a measure as He pleases..." [4]

It is quite clear that struggling for survival not only distances man from laziness, slowness, and despondency, but it also provides for him with the means for engagement in sound ways of thinking and bodily activities. Were it not so, and were there everything placed at man's disposal without any calculations, it could not be predicted how the world would look like in that situation.

A dozen jobless men, in welfare and with no controls imposed on them, would create a terrible atmosphere. For we know that the people of this world are not of the sort of those in Paradise who are devoid of all passions, egoisms, arrogance, and deviations.

They are rather of the mixed type with good and evil attributes who must be placed in the melting pot of this world so as to be experienced and differentiated.

Therefore, as need and poverty often leads man towards deviation and misfortune, too much affluence also can be a cause of corruption and destruction.

Explanations

1 – What Are Allah's Treasures?

There are many verses in the Qur'an which denote that Allah has got treasures, the heavenly treasures and the earthly ones are all His. Or the Qur'an indicates that the treasures of everything are with Him.

The Arabic term /xaz a'in/ is the plural form of /xaz anah/ which signifies a place where one stores his wealth to be protected. It is originally derived from /xazan/ which means protecting and preserving something.

Obviously, one seeks to store and preserve something who has got limited power and when one is unable to procure whatever he wants in any time. Therefore, once he is able he stores in his treasury

whatever he feels it is necessary for him in the future.

However, can one apply such concepts in case of Allah? Certainly not. That is why some commentators, like Tabarsi in Majma'–ul–Bayan, Fakhr–i–Razi in Tafsir–i–Kabir and Raqib in Mufrad at, have interpreted the phrase /xaz a'inullah/ (the treasures of Allah) as 'the possibilities of Allah'.

That is, everything is assembled in Allah's treasury of power, and He can bring forth whatever of it is deemed necessary in His Wisdom.

However, some other great commentators have claimed that the application of 'Allah's treasures' refers to the entire affairs which exist in the world of existence and the material world, including the elements and the means for creating them.

In this collection, everything exists to an unlimited extent, but every single one of the products and particular beings of this world is created to a limited extent, without considering that the existence is exclusive to it. 5

Such interpretation, though principally is an acceptable proposition, is less acceptable than the first one which interprets it 'with Us'.

Anyway, the application of such a sense like /xaz a'inullah/ which apparently does not hold true with its usual significance due to Allah, but it is such because Allah wants to speak to people through their own language. Once you are supposed to deal with a child, you will have to apply the language of children.

In conclusion, one finds it evident that the comments of some commentators who have considered the word /xaza'in/ as reservoirs of 'water and rain', and its confinement within this specified example, not only, is unsubstantiated but also it is not commensurate with the vast concept of the verse.

2 – Kinds of Descent

As it was stated earlier, descent does not always mean coming down from a high place. It also means descending in one's rank as well as in one's position. Thus, if some favour from a superior is bestowed on inferiors, it is meant as descent.

It is for this reason that this term has been applied also to Allah's blessings in the Glorious Qur'an: Whether they may be descended from the skies like rain, or they might be grown up on the earth, like animals, as verse 6 in Surah Az–Zumar, No. 39 says:

"...and He sent down for you eight head of cattle in pairs..." .

We also read concerning iron, in Surah Al–Hadid, No. 57, verse 25 that it says:

"...and We sent down iron...",

and the like.

Briefly speaking the Arabic words /nuz l/ and /'inz al/ here signify 'existence, creation and origination'. Nonetheless, as it is achieved from the side of Allah towards His servants, such an interpretation has been ascribed to it.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 22

وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيَاحَ لَوَاقِحَ فَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَآ أَنتُمْ لَهُ بِخَازِنِينَ

22. "And We send winds fertilizing, and We send down water from the sky, so We give it to you to drink of, while you are not its treasurers."

The Arabic term /law aqih/ is derived from /liq ah/ which means: fertilizing of the clouds by joining together of the positive and negative pieces of cloud,6 or it also refers to the fertilization of plants through the act of transferring of plant pollination.

Following the discussion about some of the secrets of creation and other kinds of the blessings of Allah in previous verses, the holy Qur'an alludes to the blow of the winds and their effective role in raining, when it implies that Allah sends down the winds while they are fertilizing. They join pieces of clouds together and fertilize them.

The verse says:

"And We send winds fertilizing..."

Then it continues following that Allah sends down rain, and by that He quenches the thirst of all of men, while they are unable to protect and preserve it.

The verse says:

"...and We send down water from the sky, so We give it to you to drink of, while you are not its treasurers."

That is, you are unable to collect and preserve rain in great quantities after raining. It is Allah Who by freezing it in the form of snow and ice, or through sending that to the depth of the earth, makes them come out and flow in the form of springs and wells. It is He Who collects and stores them.

Explanations

1- Man is often unable to preserve his most necessary requirements.

2- Man cannot store water within clouds for a long time. Nor can he store it on the surface of the earth. This cannot be done on the earth since it penetrates the earth, and it can not be done on stone and rocky valleys either as it evaporates.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 23 - 25

وإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَنَحْنُ الْوَارِثُونَ

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَأْخِرِينَ

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ

23. "And certainly We make alive and We cause to die and We are the (only) Heirs."
24. "And indeed We know those of you who have gone before and We are certainly aware of the succeeding ones."
25. "And verily, it is your Lord Who will gather them together, verily He is All-Wise, All-Knowing."

The matters of death and life are solely in His authority. All are transient; therefore, it is appropriate for us to leave a good heritage for the Authentic Inheritor.

The verse says:

"And certainly We make alive and We cause to die and We are the (only) Heirs."

Thus, time also will leave no impact on the knowledge of Allah. His knowledge is identical as to the past, the present, and the future.

The verse says:

"And indeed We know those of you who have gone before and We are certainly aware of the succeeding ones."

The commentators have mentioned some examples for the Qur'anic terms: /mustaqdimin/ and /musta'xirin/, among which are the followings:

1- The predecessors and the survivors.

2- Those who overtake and lovers of the Holy War, etc.

3- Those who present themselves for prayers in the front line of congregation prayer, and those who

queue up in the last line.

According to this meaning, some went as far as to queue up in the last line of congregation prayer so as to be able to look at women, who presented themselves for congregation prayer, with evil intentions as Allah says:

"We know ".

Some believers would go as far as to sell their houses to exchange it for buying a house close to the mosque so as to be able to arrive there for standing in the front line of the prayers. These are those whom the verse refers to and implies that Allah knows such people, too.

Anyway, the uprising of the Resurrection Day, and the provision of both punishment and reward are all the affairs concerned to the Ranks of the Sovereignty of Allah.

The verse says:

"And verily, it is your Lord Who will gather them together, verily He is All-Wise, All-Knowing."

Notes

Those preceding and those succeeding will be mustered altogether in the Resurrection Day:

"...who will gather them together..."

And Allah is well aware of the performances of all as well as of the intentions and impacts of any individual.

The rationale behind the resurrection is His Wisdom. If all of the particles of dust become food, and all foods become sperms and all sperms transform into human beings and they turn into dust again with their death, while there might not be any record and accounts for them, this is not a wise job done.

1. N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 6
2. Surah Noah, No. 71, verse 17
3. N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 9
4. Surah Ash-Shaur a, No. 42, verse 27
5. Al-Mizan, vol. 12, p. 148
6. Surah Az-Zariyat, No. 51, verse 41 implies that the wind is at times of no use and causes no fertilization, while at other times, it is also serving as sources of blessings. Again Surah An-N�r, No. 24, verse 43 says:

   "Do you not see that Allah directs the scattered clouds then He gathers them together and amasses them once again, and then you see the rain coming forth from their midst?..."

Section 3: Man’s Creation – Satan’s Arrogance

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 26 - 27

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الإِنسَانَ مِن صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ

وَالْجَآنَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن قَبْلُ مِن نَّارِ السَّمُومِ

26. “And certainly We created man of raw clay, of black mud moulded.”
27. “And the jinn We created before, of intensively burning fire.”

The Arabic term /sals al/ refers to a dry and raw kind of clay in which once blown, the sound of whistling comes out of it. [1]

The Qur’anic term /hama’/ refers to dark mud, and the word /masnūn/ means varying and moulded. The Arabic word /sumūm/ refers to a hot wind which infiltrates into the depth of one’s entity like poison.

This verse either makes allusions to the creation of the first man, namely Hadrat-i-Adam, or the objective is the process of creation of all human beings in which case, the materials within the earth are transformed through food and sperm into human beings.

As Qur’an in Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 37, implies that man was first in the from of dust, then it was turned into semen (sperm-drop) and it was finally turned into a (complete) man.

In the Qur’anic literature, ‘jinn’ is a responsible being which has been addressed by Allah:

“O’ assembly of the jinn and mankind!...”[2]

And Jinn understands the Qur’an:

“...a party of the jinn listened, and they said: Verily we have heard a wonderful Qur’an.”[3]

Jinns also have passions like human beings.

According to this verse, the creation of jinn took place before man and it was created out of fire.

Allah says:

Iblis is also one of Jinns:

"...he was of the Jinn..."[4]

and Iblis will go into Hell like other evil Jinns.

"...Certainly I will fill Hell with the Jinn and the mankind together."[5]

In conclusion, the Qur'an implies that Allah has created man out of raw and dry clay (like tile or ceramic) which is extracted out of a kind of black clay. Prior to this, He had created Jinns out of hot and burning fire.

The verse says:

"And certainly We created man of raw clay, of black mud moulded."

"And the jinn We created before, of intensively burning fire."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 28 – 31

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلآئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَراً مِّن صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلآئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ

إِلاَّ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى أَن يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ

28. "And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'Verily, I am about to create man of raw clay, of black mud moulded'."
29. "So when I have completed him and I have breathed into him of My Spirit, fall you down, prostrating yourselves unto him.
30. "So the angels fell prostrate, all of them together,"
31. "Except 'Iblis; he refused to be with those who prostrated (in obedience)."

The statement of the Qur'an returns to the issue of creation of man once again and continues Allah's speaking with the angels which took place before the man's creation.

It says as follows:

"And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'Verily, I am about to create man of raw clay,

of black mud moulded'."

Addressing the Divine angels, He continues: And when I completed the creation process and I blow into him a noble, clean and splendid soul out of My Own, all and each one of you prostrate before him.

The verse says:

"So when I have completed him and I have breathed into him of My Spirit, fall you down, prostrating yourselves unto him."

The creation of man then was over and man was provided for with whatever of body and soul was required for him. Everything was accomplished: At this moment, all angels prostrated without any exceptions before him.

The Qur'an says:

"So the angels fell prostrate, all of them together,"

The only one who did not obey this order was 'Iblis. Therefore, it adds:

"Except 'Iblis; he refused to be with those who prostrated (in obedience)."

Note Two Issues with Respect to This matter

The objective meaning of the blowing of Allah's spirit into man is not the state of being alive and to breathe, for animals also do the same thing. However, the purpose is the bestowal of such qualifications as creativity, will, and knowledge from the part of Allah accorded to human beings.

The attributing of spirit to Allah is for the sake of elevation of the position of spirit, such as the words as /bayt-ul-lah/ (House of Allah) and /šahr-ul-lah/ (the month of Allah).

The prostration of the angels before man was not a ceremonial kind of prostration. It was meant to present the modesty of angels when confronting man himself and the human generations. That is, the angels are also at the service of man and submissive to him. 6

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 32 - 35

قَالَ يَآ إِبْلِيسُ مَالَكَ اَلاَّ تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ

قَالَ لَمْ أَكُن لاَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُ مِن صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَأٍ مَّسْنُونٍ

قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ

وإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ إِلَي يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

32. "He said: 'O' Iblis! What is your reason for not being with those who prostrated (in obedience)?'"
33. "('Iblis) said: 'I am not such that I prostrate myself unto a man whom You have created of raw clay, of black mud moulded'."
34. "He said: 'Then get out of it, for verily you are driven away accursed'."
35. "And, verily, the curse will be on you until the Day of Judgment."

It was on this occasion that 'Iblis was interrogated, in the course of which he was addressed as follows:

"He said: 'O' Iblis! What is your reason for not being with those who prostrated (in obedience)?'"

'Iblis who was selfishly engaged in matters of pride and egoism, so much so that he had lost his wisdom, responded to the Lord in a rude way, as the verse says:

"('Iblis) said I am not such that I prostrate myself unto a man whom you have created of raw clay, of black mud moulded'."

He who had not been kept in touch with the secrets of creation due to his pride and egoism, and who fell down suddenly from the climax of his position, was no more eligible to be among the ranks of the angels.

Therefore, he was immediately addressed by Allah, as such:

"He said: 'Then get out of it, for verily you are driven away accursed'."

And Satan was warned to beware that his arrogance served as the source of his disbelief. This disbelief made his cast off for ever.

The verse says:

"And, verily, the curse will be on you until the Day of Judgment."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 36 - 38

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرْنِي إِلَي يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ

إِلَي يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ

36. "(*'Iblis*) said: 'O' Lord! Respite me then till the day when they are raised?"
37. "Said He: 'Then verily you are of the respited ones'."
38. "Till the day of the appointed time."

As 'Iblis found himself an outcast from the threshold of the Allah's court and felt that man's creation caused his misfortune, the flames of hatred started within him so as to take vengeance on the sons of Adam.

It was why, as the verse says:

"(*'Iblis*) said: 'O' Lord! Respite me then till the day when they are raised?"

This the Satan asked not for the sake of repenting, or for the sake of regretting as to what he had done, seeking to compensate for everything, but rather in order to continue his obstinacy, hostility, and his stiff-neckedness.

So did Allah accept this request of 'Iblis.

The verse says:

"Said He: 'Then verily you are of the respited ones'."

However, this respite does not extend in time as far as the Day of Judgment on which all mankind will be raised, as 'Iblis requested, but for 'a definite time'.

The verse says:

"Till the day of the appointed time."

The objective in mind when mentioning

"***Till the day of the appointed time.***",

is the end of this world and the rolling up of the designated duration of the duties.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 39 - 40

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

إِلاَّ عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

39. "('Iblis) said: 'O' Lord! because You have left me to stray, certainly I will adorn (evil) to them on the earth, and certainly I will cause them all to go astray'."
40. "Except Your chosen servants among them."

Here we find 'Iblis revealed and exposed his true hidden intention, though nothing was hidden from Him, when 'Iblis answered Allah implying that He refused him and it was this 'man' who paved the ground for his misfortunes, 'Iblis should be engaged from then on in attracting them to the material blessings of this world by decorating and vanishing them, thus seeking to make them engaged in them.

Therefore, ultimately, he would cause them all to be misled.

The verse says:

"('Iblis) said: 'O' Lord! because You have left me to stray, certainly I will adorn (evil) to them on the earth, and certainly I will cause them all to go astray'."

Nevertheless, he knew well that his mischief would never leave any impact on the devotee servants of Allah.

Therefore, he soon made an exception to his saying, and said:

"Except Your chosen servants among them."

These are those who have attained the highest levels of Faith and practice which have been brought about after going through a thorough educational curriculum and struggle against their 'egotistic selves'.

There are two points raised in here which are worth mentioning:

Allah never leads anyone astray. However, if someone seeks willingly to accept the deviant path, Allah may leave him alone. This abandoning is the utmost case of the Divine punishment and outrage. As 'Iblis also willingly selected the path of arrogance and obstinacy, Allah left him to his own means.

Then the objective in saying /'aqwaytani/ (you have left me to stray) is meant in the same sense. That is, now that You no longer locate me within the reach of Your blessings and You left me alone to my own devices for the sake of my obstinate behavior, I will then do this and that.

'Iblis knows that a group of people are among the Divine selected ones. (That is, he has also accepted the legitimacy of 'Prophethood' and 'Imamate' as one can conclude from the clause:

"O' Lord! because You have left me to stray"

that he has also accepted Allah. And as one also concludes from his prayer to be given a second

chance ***"…till the day when they are raised"***, he has also accepted the principle of Resurrection.

Therefore, 'Iblis was right in his ideological principles. However, his main fault was his arrogance and his not having a spirit of submission and servitude.

Thus, it is not enough to embrace merely the Faith and to have knowledge of something; but also practice, submission to the Will of Allah, and servitude are necessary.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 41 - 42

قَالَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلاَّ مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ

41. "Said He: 'This is for Me a straight path (***which I have undertaken***)***'."***
42. "Verily, (***as regards***) ***My*** (***devoted***) ***servants, there is not for you over them any authority, except those who follow you of the deviators."***

In the previous verse, 'Iblis announced that he would mislead all except the selected devotee individuals. In this verse, Allah remarks: The reason as to why 'Iblis does not have the power to dominate His servants is because of His Straight Path and His way of treatment.

That is, Allah's way of treatment is such that He Himself guarantees their protection, and this does not imply that 'Iblis would have nothing to do with them. On the contrary, he might not be in a position to exercise any power over them.

The verse says:

"Said He: 'This is for Me a straight path (***which I have undertaken***)***'."***

Thus, the Satan has got no power over those who are devoted to Allah and are submissive to Him. If we can enter the circle of Allah's servants through our worshipping and virtue, we may be insured and can be rest assure.

The verse says:

"Verily, (***as regards***) ***My*** (***devoted***) ***servants, there is not for you over them any authority, except those who follow you of the deviators."***

Incidentally, the Satan's job is engaging man in mischief and not exercising or exerting his domination:

“…there is not for you over them any authority…”.

In the resurrection day, the Satan, answering the people’s protests, will say:

“I only invited you; I did not put you under any obligation or domination.”

Anyway, in order to despise the Satan and to reinforce the position of the truth-seeking individuals and those who are the followers of the path of monotheism, He said that the straight path which He has undertaken is His usual way of treatment and that Satan will have no authority or domination over His servants except on those misled ones who may voluntarily follow his footsteps.

That is, it is not indeed Satan who is able to seduce people. Rather, it is the deviants who willingly accept Satan’s call and follow his footsteps.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 43 - 44

وإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِّكُلِّ بَابٍ مِّنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُومٌ

43. “And verily Hell is certainly the promised place of them all.”
44. “It has seven gates, for every gate there shall be a (separate) party of them assigned.”

Allah has directed His most explicit threats towards the followers of the Satan, saying:

“And verily Hell is certainly the promised place of them all.”

Let them not conjecture that they can escape punishment or their accounts would not be scrutinized. It is the same Hell which has got seven gates, and each of which is allocated to one category of the followers of Satan.

The verse says:

“It has seven gates, for every gate there shall be a (separate) party of them assigned.”

These are, in fact, the gates of the sins through which men will be led into Hell. As is the case with those categories of people who enter Paradise, having with them a bag back of righteous deeds and struggles, which qualify them for entering Paradise.

The seven gateways of the Hell probably signifies that the number of the factors for those going to Hell is abundant. That is, there are numerous ways which predispose one to go to Hell.

Like verse 27 of Surah Luqman No. 31 which says:

"And were every tree that is in the earth** (**made into**) **pens and the sea** (**to supply it with ink**), **with seven more seas to increase it, the words of Allah would not come to an end..."

This means that they cannot write out all Allah's words, and here an allusion is made to the fact that Allah's creatures are so enormous in quantity that they are not to be accounted.

Messages

Each of the Paradise and Hell has some doorways.

"It has seven gates..."

(We read in Nahj-ul-Balaghah that the strugglers in the path of Allah will have got a particular entrance to Paradise.)

Hell, just like Paradise, has also got different levels and grades, and each person will be punished in it according to his own offence.

1. Tafsir Al-Mizan
2. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 130
3. Surah Al-Jinn, No. 72,verse 1
4. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 50
5. Surah H d, No. 11,verse 119
6. Tafsir Al-Mizan, vol. 12, p. 165

Section 4: Reward for the Righteous – Angles Give Abraham the Tidings of a Son

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 45 - 48

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلاَمٍ ءَامِنِينَ

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَاناً عَلَي سُرُرٍ مُتَقابِلِينَ

لاَ يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ

45. "Verily, the pious ones shall be amidst gardens and watersprings."
46. "(They will be addressed:) 'Enter you therein in peace, secure'."
47. "And We remove whatever rancour may be in their breasts. (They will be as) brothers upon coaches, face to face."
48. "No toil there shall afflict them in it, nor shall they be ever cast out of it."

Through these holy verses, Allah has stated eight heavenly rewards for the people of virtue. They are: gardens, springs, health, security, removal of all hatred, brotherhood, face to face coaches, being aloof from any kind of harm or toil, and immortality.

The Qur'an says:

"Verily, the pious ones shall be amidst gardens and watersprings."

"(They will be addressed:) 'Enter you therein in peace, secure'."

In the previous verse, we read that except those sincere believers selected by Allah, all people will be targeted by the Satan's temptations. In these verses the Qur'an implies that if man does not reach the heights already achieved by those who are devoted and selected, but attains the objectives for the hierarchy of virtues, he will still be covered by the kinds of Divine blessings.

The Qur'an says:

"And We remove whatever rancour may be in their breasts. (They will be as) brothers upon coaches, face to face."

What is of importance in this stage is the assembling of all blessings in one unit. In this world one finds gardens in one place, while there may be no springs therein, sometimes there are streams to be found there but there is no security over there; at times all are present with together, though there may not be authenticity or sincerity furnished there.

At times, it happens that all those blessings are coupled with different kinds of hardships and are tedious to obtain. At other times, when all blessings are brought together, one has to abdicate them all and leave them behind. However, what differentiates Hereafter from this world is that all material, spiritual, social and psychological blessings are eternal in Heaven.

The verse says:

"No toil there shall afflict them in it, nor shall they be ever cast out of it."

Attention: The Arabic term /qill/ mentioned in verse 47 signifies secret infiltration. Therefore, evil

characteristics set in their roots secretly in human beings. The Qur’anic terms /surur/ amd /sarir/ are derived from the word /sur�r/ which means ‘throne’. One concludes that accession to the throne is pleasant and causes one’s rejoicing.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 49 - 50

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الأَلِيمُ

49. “(O Prophet!) Inform My servants (that) verily I am the Forgiving, the Merciful,”
50. “And that My chastisement is the painful chastisement.”

Now, it may be possible that some sinners and deviant individuals sink in their own depression, saying:

“We wish we could also reap parts of such blessings.”

It is at this moment that Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, opens up the gateways of Paradise to them, but with some conditions.

Addressing affectionately and with utmost caressing His Prophet, He says:

“(O Prophet!) Inform My servants (that) verily I am the Forgiving, the Merciful,”

Note

In these holy verses, the blissful Qur’an divides all people into 4 categories:

The devotees (prophets and the saints) over whom ’Iblis has no domination.

The pious ones who will be dwelling in Paradise.

The repenting sinners whom the Prophet (S) talks about their amnesty in this verse.

The disobedient sinners who have been warned as against their severe and painful chastisement.

The verse says:

“And that My chastisement is the painful chastisement.”

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 51 – 52

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ عَن ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلاَماً قَالَ إِنَّا مِنكُمْ وَجِلُونَ

51. "And inform them of the guests of Abraham."
52. "When they entered upon him and said: 'Peace', he said: 'Verily we are scared of you!'"

From this verse on, the Qur'an discusses some instructive parts of the history of great prophets and the disobedient nations as clear examples of the devotee servants and the followers of Satan.

It begins with the story of 'Ibrahim's guests, saying:

"And inform them of the guests of Abraham."

These uninvited guests were the same angels who anonymously called on 'Ibrahim first, and said /salam/ (peace) to him.

The verse says:

"When they entered upon him and said: 'Peace', he said: 'Verily we are scared of you!'"

'Ibrahim got ready to receive them, as is the case with a great and kind host, and prepared immediately a proper food for them. But when he spread the dinner table, the unknown guests did not stretch their hands to take food.

Abraham terrified by this act and, without concealing his terror, he explicitly told them that he was afraid of them:

"Verily we are scared of you.".

This kind of fear was because of a tradition prevalent at that time and at later times, even at the present among some nations that whenever someone eats out of someone else's bread and salt, he would feel safe from his side for he feels he owes him something.

It was for this reason that when the angels did not eat the food, 'Ibrahim reasoned it as the sign of having ill-intentions, rancour, and enmity with regard to him.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 53 – 54

قَالُوا لاَ تَوْجَلْ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلاَمٍ عَلِيمٍ

قَالَ أَبَشَّرْتُمُونِي عَلَى أَن مَسَّنِيَ الْكِبَرُ فَبِمَ تُبَشِّرُونَ

53. "They said: 'Be not afraid! Verily we give you the good news of a son endowed with knowledge."
54. "He said: 'Do you give me such good news (***of a son***) ***while old age has touched me? Of what do you give me good news?"***

One of the examples of the Divine blessings and Divine outrage is the story of prophet 'Ibrahim (as) in which we have the angels, on one hand, giving good news of a son to him, while on the other hand, we have their news concerning the annihilation of the people of Lot as well, when by the latter Abraham was worried.

However, before long the angels stopped 'Ibrahim from worrying, commending him not to be frightened, for they were giving him good news of fathering a wise son.

The verse says:

"They said: 'Be not afraid! Verily we give you the good news of a son endowed with knowledge."

However, Abraham knew that, from the point of the natural laws, the birth of such a child by him was a remote matter. Yet, there is nothing impossible for the Power of Allah. So, regarding the normal circumstances and natural laws, he said:

"He said: 'Do you give me such good news (***of a son***) ***while old age has touched me?..."***

Then Abraham continued his statement by saying:

"...Of what do you give me good news?"

Is this news from Allah's side or is it you who are giving me the news by yourselves? State clearly so as I can be sure.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 55 – 56

قَالُوا بَشَّرْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلاَ تَكُن مِّنَ الْقَانِطِينَ

قَالَ وَمَن يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّـهِ إِلاَّ الضَّآلُّونَ

55. "They (the guests) said: 'We give you good news of the Truth. Therefore, be you not of the despairing ones'."
56. "He said: 'And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord save those who are astray?'"

Let us take didactic lessons, sweet and bitter ones, from history. The best histories are the ones which concern the life of the prophets (as) and the best historians are the prophets themselves.

Sometimes the angels appear in the form of human beings by the Divine Will and get in touch with man, among which one may refer to this very story of Hadrat Abraham (as) in which the angels felt that Abraham became scared.

Therefore, the angels did not give any further chances to Abraham to wonder or hesitate more. They told him explicitly and decisively that they were carrying the news of the Truth to provide him with. The kind of good news coming from Allah, and by His order, is the Truth, and nothing but the truth, that is why it is identical with the Truth and is certain as well.

The verse says:

"They (the guests) said: 'We give you good news of the Truth..."

Following that and to stress further presuming 'Ibrahim having not been overtaken by any fear and depression, they declared: Now that such is the case, do not be among the desperate.

The verse continues saying:

"...Therefore, be you not of the despairing ones'."

Nonetheless, Abraham quickly alienated this thinking from their minds that he might be overtaken by hopelessness from the Divine grace. On the contrary, his sole astonishment concentrated on the issues of natural laws. Therefore, he explicitly stated in an interrogative sentence, implying who on earth despairs from Allah's grace except those who are misled?

The verse says:

"He said: 'And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord save those who are astray?'"

These are those seduced people who have not rightly come to know Allah and have not realized the dimensions of His indefinite powers.

That Lord Who creates such an amazing and smashing being called 'man' out of some tiny particles of dust, and brings into existence such a prestigious child out of insignificant semen. He Who turns and

transforms burning fires into a rose-garden. Who can then doubt the ability of such a Lord or despair from His grace?

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 57 - 58

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ

قَالُوا إِنَّآ أُرْسِلْنَآ إِلَي قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ

57. "He said: 'What is your business, then, O' you (Divine) messengers?'"
58. "They said: 'Verily we have been sent unto a guilty people (to annihilate them)',"

Before starting their mission, the angels used to brief the Divine leaders about their own missions.

Therefore, after hearing about this good news, Abraham (as) started thinking as to the fact that the angels, under those circumstances, had not merely come there to give him simply the news of having a son.

Definitely, they had come to achieve a more important mission, and the conveying of the good news could be regarded only as a part of that mission.

It was for this reason that he went on asking them:

"He said: 'What is your business, then, O' you (Divine) messengers?'"

The angels responded that they had been sent to a sinful nation to annihilate them.

The Qur'an announces their answer, as the verse says:

"They said: 'Verily we have been sent unto a guilty people (to annihilate them)',"

Thus they made him understand that they had come to destroy the sinful people of Lot, for the angels were not sent down to that nation but for their destruction.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 59 - 60

إِلاَّ ءَالَ لُوطٍ إِنَّا لَمُنَجُّوهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

إِلاَّ امْرَأَتَهُ قَدَّرْنَآ إِنَّهَا لَمِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ

59. "Save the family of Lot, We shall surely rescue them all."

60. "Except his wife, of whom we decreed that she should be among those who remain behind (in the chastisement)."

Hadrat-i-'Ibrahim (as) and Hadrat-i-Lot (as) did not recognize the angels in their first encounter.

Therefore, Abraham said:

"Verily we are scared of you!", 1

and Lot said:

"Verily you are an unknown people." 2

Certainly, these angels became as Lot's guests while appearing in the form of some handsome youths with smart and beautiful faces, and that prophet got worried about such guests because of the corruption which was prevalent in that society.

And it was for this reason that the angels, knowing about the curiosity of Abraham, especially in such matters and issues, would not be content with such a brief answer, instantly added that such an offensive nation is no other than the Lot's people.

They also remarked that they were sent on the mission to wipe out that evil-begotten and shameless villains, pounding them thoroughly and to exterminate them altogether, except Lot's family members whom they should rescue all.

The verse says:

"Save the family of Lot, We shall surely rescue them all."

However, as the Arabic phrase /' alal t/ (the family of Lot) with an emphasis on /'ajma'in/ (them all), included all of his family members encompassing even his misguided wife, who cooperated with the pagans, and perhaps with the awareness of 'Ibrahim of the matter, the angels immediately made her an exception to the rule, and said:

"Except his wife, of whom we decreed that she should be among those who remain behind (in the chastisement)."

Explanations

The Arabic term /qabirin/ is the plural of /q abir/ which means; 'the remaining ones' and the remaining soil is called dust.

One may conclude from the concept of the noble verse that she (Lot's wife) was among those who had

got to stay in the town and was to be killed like other inhabitants of the town.

1. The current Surah, verse 52
2. Ibid, verse 62

Section 5: Lot and Shu'ayb's people

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 61 - 62

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ءَالَ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَومٌ مُّنكَرُونَ

61. "So when the (Divine) messengers came unto the family of Lot."
62. "He said: 'Verily you are an unknown people'."

As the angels called upon the household of Lot, the situation was such that Lot was busy with his agriculture in the land outside the town. He wanted to give them a reception. At the same time, he was terrified of his people, therefore, he brought them secretly and by night to the house.

The wife of Lot, on their arrival, went up on the top of the roof and, by burning fire, informed the people about what was going on. Those people, who were thus informed, assembled in that house and determined to commit that heinous and hideous act with them in which case Hadrat-i-Lot (as) was disturbed.

Hadrat-i-Lot told the angels that they were an unknown group of individuals to him as they had not been met before.

The Qur'an says:

"So when the (Divine) messengers came unto the family of Lot."

"He said: 'Verily you are an unknown people'."

The angels introduced themselves saying that they were angels coming from Allah's side to exterminate the nation and to save the household of Lot.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 63 - 64

قَالُوا بَلْ جِئْنَاكَ بِمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ

وأَتَيْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ

63. "They said: 'Nay, but we have come to you with that in which they have been doubting'."
64. "And we have come to you with the truth, and we are certainly truthful."

The Qur'an has repeatedly raised this issue that the pagans used to request the prophets to accelerate the Divine outrage and punishment and used to say:

'... then bring us what you promise us to, if you are of the truthful ones". [1]

Meaning that if you are honest, show us the outrage and they used to ridicule and mock all the warnings. As for the Divine outrage, they were skeptic as to its occurrence whether in this world or in the next. Allah explains in these verses that the outrage, which is the object of skepticism of the pagans, will definitely come.

The verse says:

"They said: 'Nay, but we have come to you with that in which they have been doubting'."

Anyway, the angels did not leave Lot in expectation for a long time and they explicitly stated that they had brought him something which his people were in doubt about. That is, they were commissioned to inflict a painful and severe chastisement against them which Lot had repeatedly warned them about and they had never taken it seriously.

To emphasize, they implied that they had brought Lot an unequivocal and an obvious reality for him. That is, a certain and decisive chastisement for those unbelieving and deviant group.

The verse says:

"And we have come to you with the truth..."

To stress further, they added:

"...and we are certainly truthful."

That is, this group has destroyed all the bridges behind them and there is no room left for any type of mediation or discussion about them. They said such so as Lot would stop thinking about any mediation

efforts and become aware of the fact that they were not in the least worthy of such steps to be taken for them.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 65 – 66

فَاَسْرِ بِاَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ الَّيْلِ وَاتَّبِعْ أَدْبَارَهُمْ وَلاَ يَلْتَفِتْ مِنكُمْ أَحَدٌ وَامْضُوا حَيْثُ تُؤْمَرُونَ

وَقَضَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ ذَلِكَ الاَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَؤُلآءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُّصْبِحِينَ

65. "So set forth, you with your family, in a part of the night and do you go behind them and let not any one of you turn back, and go whither you are ordered."
66. "And We made known this decree to him that the roots of those (sinners) should be cut off by the morning."

Do not take the Divine warnings and threats as a joke, for the Divine punishments are always based on justice, the truth and what the culprits deserve.

And at the time of war or of exodus, the leader must move keeping abreast with the weakest of the people so as no believer would be left behind and no foes or pagans could join, and rest assured of Allah's grace in important circumstances, which will be herded down moment by moment and will be of assistance to him once he is in dire need.

The verse says:

"So set forth, you with your family..."

It will be shown to him as to when the exodus must take place, and with whom, by what means, and finally, towards what destination.

The verse continues saying:

"...in a part of the night and do you go behind them and let not any one of you turn back, and go whither you are ordered."

And as the small group of believers (the household of Lot except his wife) was to be rescued from such a campaign safely, Lot was provided with the necessary instructions.

He should take his family out of the town late at night when the sinners were in deep asleep or they were drunk or engaged in gratifying their sexual desires. However, he should move behind them so that he might be sure that no one was left behind. In the meantime, none of them was allowed to look or turn back.

Then, the tone of the statement changes, where Allah says:

“And We made known this decree to him that the roots of those* (*sinners*) *should be cut off by the morning.”

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 67 - 69

وَجَآءَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

قَالَ إِنَّ هؤُلاَءِ ضَيْفِي فَلاَ تَفْضَحُونِ

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلاَ تُخْزُونِ

67. “And the inhabitants of the town came rejoicing.”
68. “He said: ‘Verily these are my guests, therefore do not disgrace me’.”
69. “And be in awe of Allah and do not put me to shame.”

Some authentic quotations indicate that the wife of Lot informed the sinners that there are guests arrived for Lot with beautiful faces and, following their evil intention, they headed for the Lot’s house while giving one another the good news. However, Allah exterminated them all before proceeding to undertake any action. 2

Anyway, they were busy thinking about their misleading and shameful acts, and they intended to commit as to the fact that they had then an easy prey at their disposal; beautiful and good-looking youths and at the Lot’s house.

The verse says:

“And the inhabitants of the town came rejoicing.”

Lot (as), who heard their fuss, got terrified in a state of astonishing terror and feared for his guests.

Therefore, he stood up against them, as the verse says:

“He said: ‘Verily these are my guests, therefore do not disgrace me’.”

Then he adds, implying: Fear Allah and do not make me shameful in front of my guests.

“And be in awe of Allah and do not put me to shame.”

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 70 - 71

قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

قَالَ هَؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِن كُنتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ

70. "They said: 'Did we not dissuade you from** (**entertaining**) **people?"
71. "He** (**Lot**) **said: 'These are my daughters,** (**you may wed them**) **if you desire to do so."

The prophets' school of thought does not recommend the forbidding of pleasures and repressing of instincts. On the contrary, it offers guidance and mostly provides ways for their control. Therefore, Hadrat-i-Lot (as) offered them guidance and persuaded them to act decently.

Nonetheless, they were so rude and vulgar that they did not have any feelings of shame. On the contrary, they felt that Lot had also to be indebted to them as if he had committed a crime they went on raising objections.

The verse says:

"They said: 'Did we not dissuade you from** (**entertaining**) **people?"

Anyway, Lot, who noticed such rudeness and vulgarity, tried a different method so as to perhaps be able to awaken them from their state of negligence, drunkenness, deviation and scandal. Turning to them, he advised them:

Why do you take a deviant path? If your objective in mind is gratification of your sexual instincts why is it that you do not take the legitimate path and the correct marriage path? These are my daughters; (I am ready to give my consent for them marrying you). In case you decide to perform a correct and decent act, this is the right path.

The verse says:

"He** (**Lot**) **said: 'These are my daughters,** (**you may wed them**) **if you desire to do so."

Lot's aim was to complete the argument to them, saying that he was ready to preserve the prestige of his guests and to save them from the abyss of corruption by offering his daughters in marriage to them.

Question: Was Lot (as) able to offer his daughters in marriage to the pagans, when he offered such a proposal?

Answer: It may be that the aim of proposing the marriage issue was to make believers out of them; or

that, among them, marriage with unbelievers was not legally prohibited at that time.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 72 - 73

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ

72. “By your life (O’ Prophet), verily they were wandering on in their intoxication.”
73. “So the (violent) blast overtook them at the sunrise.”

The Arabic words /‘umr/ and /‘amr/ both have got an identical meaning, but, at the time of swearing, the term /‘amr/ is employed. [3]

The Qur’anic term /ya‘mah�n/ is derived from /‘amaha/ which signifies ‘astonishment’; and the Arabic word /mušriqin/ means ‘entering into the illumination and the light which appears at dawn or sunrise.’

Nevertheless, woe unto those who are intoxicated by their passions, deviations, arrogance, and obstinacy.

If there were the slightest of human ethical values or human emotions embedded in them, it would be adequate to make them feel ashamed for having such a logic to return from the Lot’s house at least and feel shameful. But, they were not only unaffected by that, but they became also more rude and tried to violate and rape Lot’s guests as well.

It is why Allah, addressing the Prophet of Islam (S), says:

“By your life (O’ Prophet), verily they were wandering on in their intoxication.”

Finally, we find the Divine words and speech, concerning this nation, reaches its climax. Allah states in two concise, compact and short following verses the evil destiny of those people in a decisive and pounding form here which is also instructive as well.

The Qur’an says:

“So the (violent) blast overtook them at the sunrise.”

Such a blast might have been caused by a huge thunderbolt or by a terrible earthquake.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 74

فَجَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِن سِجِّيلٍ

74. "Thus We turned that city upside down and rained upon them stones of hard clay."

Raining stones was probably for the extermination of those who had survived at the moment of the turning upside down of the town and were still alive, or for the total annihilation of the town.

Certainly, Allah's Will knows no limits for as He descends His blessings from the sky in the form of rain, He is also able to rain stones, and chastisement as well.

However, Allah did not stop at that, but He turned their cities entirely upside down, overthrowing all its upper part downwards and the lower part upwards.

The verse says:

"Thus We turned that city upside down..."

Such a chastisement was not enough for them either.

The verse continues saying:

"...and rained upon them stones of hard clay."

The descending of the three-fold kind of punishments (terrible blast, turning everything upside down, and raining stones) each was sufficient by itself to wipe out every nation.

However, for the intensity of the sin and in their submission to sinfulness and ill fame, and that others may take an example, Allah multiplied their punishment.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 75

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ

75. "Verily, in this there are signs for those who by tokens do understand."

The blissful Qur'an, here, draws ethical and educational conclusions. It implies that there are various signs for the wise in this didactic biography, for those who wisely draw their own conclusions from every single symbol, collect facts from every allusion made, and learn from every note what is to be learnt.

The Qur'an says:

"Verily, in this there are signs for those who by tokens do understand."

The Qur'anic term /mutawassimin/, mentioned in the verse, is derived from /wasama/ which means 'to affect' and it is applied to a person who is smart and sharp in drawing conclusions once he has the tiniest clues at his disposal he comprehends the facts.

That is, he is clever and wise. Some Islamic quotations indicate that the objective of applying the term /mutawassimin/ is the Prophet (S) and his Ahl-ul-Bayt (as). [4]

Somebody told Imam Sadiq (as) that he had got a question. The Imam answered:

"Do you want me to tell you what your question is before you ask your question?"

That person asked with astonishment:

"How do you know what is in my mind?"

The Imam answered:

"/bil-tawassum/ (by affection)."

Then he recited this verse. [5]

We are informed from the Immaculate Imams (as) who have said:

"We are the /mutavassimin/."

It is clear that the purpose here 'is the most complete denotation expansion', otherwise, there are a lot of intelligent people among the believers. Therefore, there are reliable information from the blissful Prophet (S) who stated:

"Be in virtue with the intelligence of the faithful, since he looks by the light of Allah."

He also reaffirmed:

"Verily Allah has some servants who recognize people by /tawassum/." [6]

This is the same light of faith which leaves its effect as a sign on a believer's heart; so it is said:

"Knowledge is a light (that) Allah casts it inside the heart of whomever He wills." [7]

And the Arabic term /wasm/ means the same sign, symbol, and emblem which is being forged on the Arabian horses. Man's soul also has got a special mark of 'belief' or 'disbelief', or of 'obedience' and of 'disobedience' toward Allah, each of which appears from his front view.

Thus, /mutawassimin/, those who by tokens do understand can observe or feel it and, therefore, know everyone.

And again, the Prophet of Islam (S) has said:

“There are certain Allah’s servants who know people by tokens.” [8]

Imam Sadiq (as) remarked:

“We are those who think and take instructive lessons. The path towards happiness has been designated and embedded in us. This path is the way towards Paradise.” [9]

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 76 – 77

وإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

76. “And verily it is on a way (yet) remaining.”
77. “Verily, in this there is a sign for the believers.”

The preservation of the monuments and relics of the past provide instructive lessons for the future generations.

Therefore, He implies in this noble verse: Do not presume that all their relics have been vanished. It is not so. Their relics and monuments have remained constant and fixed on the roads for caravans and those who pass over there.

As the city of Lot is located on the people’s path and when they pass by them for meeting their daily needs, they draw lessons from them. For, the relics, which become focus of attention of the people there, are always constant, fixed and sustaining.

The verse says:

“And verily it is on a way (yet) remaining.”

This city is called ‘Sud□m’. Qatt adah says: The villages of the people of Lot are situated between Medina and Sham (Damascus).

As the author of Tafsir-i-Atyab-ul-Bayan says: Perhaps, the meaning of the above verse is that the Divine outrage is not confined to the people of Lot only; rather, it is the method and the tradition which is

constant and holds true for all the criminals of the history. It is also a warning for all those who commit such heinous and hideous acts that the people of Lot used to do.

Some Islamic traditions denote that he who commits the act committed by the people of Lot, will be suffering from the utmost punishment at the time when his soul is being taken out of his body. Further, some quotations indicate that this act has been rendered into the disbelief in Allah and the punishment of which is 'execution'.

As a further emphasis, and in order to call the faithful to meditate more over this instructive story, the Qur'an implies that there is a sign in this story for those who are believers, as the true believers are always full of insight and are quite intelligent.

The verse says:

"Verily, in this there is a sign for the believers."

How may one be a believer and yet reads this shaking biography and still does not draw instructive lessons from it?

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 78 - 79

وَإِن كَانَ أَصْحَابُ الآيْكَةِ لَظَالِمِينَ

فَانتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وإِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ

78. "And verily, the inhabitants of 'Aykah were certainly unjust."
79. "So We inflicted retribution on them and they are both, indeed, on a roadway manifest (in front of your eyes)."

The Arabic word /'aykah/ means a small thick forest in which trees and their branches are often intertwined with one another. The objective of 'the inhabitants of 'Aykah' is the people of Hadrat Shu'ayb, who used to live in a region with moderate weather and full of trees, somewhere between Hij az and Sham (Syria).

A quotation from the blissful Prophet (S) indicates that 'the people of Madyan' and 'the people of 'Aykah' were two nations whose prophet was Shu'ayb and both of them disbelieved.

The verse says:

"And verily, the inhabitants of 'Aykah were certainly unjust."

However, each of these two nations received a different kind of Divine punishment.

The former was entangled in the punishment of ‘the Day of Shadow’ and the latter received ‘the punishment of Blast’.[10]

Incidentally, as Allah owes nothing to anyone, whatever we receive from Him must be considered as a gift. But, in case of the Divine punishment, as His chastisement is the consequence of our own faults and sins and what we deserve, the word retribution is usually employed.

The verse says:

***“So We inflicted retribution on them and they are both, indeed, on a roadway manifest** (**in front of your eyes**).”*

The oppressors must know that their vice and tyranny will be depicted for others throughout history. Hence, we must design and plan roads in such a way as to try to expose historical sites within the reach of the eye-sight of the passengers.

1. Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 70
2. Tafsir-i-Maraghi
3. Al-Mizan. The commentary
4. Tafsir-i-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
5. Tafsir-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
6. Tafsir-i-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 23
7. Tafsir-i-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 23
8. Tafsir-us-Safi, the details of the verse
9. Tafsir-ul-Burhan and Majma‘-ul-Bayan
10. Tafsir-ul-Furqan, taken from Durr-ul-Manth�r, vol. 4, p. 103

Section 6: The People of the Rock

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 80 - 81

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْحِجْرِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

وءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ ءَايَاتِنَا فَكَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ

80. “And indeed the inhabitants of Hijr** (**also**) **rejected the messengers.”

81. "And We presented Our signs to them, but they turned away from them."

The Arabic word 'Al-Hijr' is the name of a town in which the nation of Tham�d used to live. It also generally refers to a dwelling place as well. The term /hijr/ also refers to the lap of the mother and Arabic phrase Hijr-i-'Ism a'il and /hujrah/ are the derivatives of the same word. 1

Thus, the name of this Surah has been taken from this verse.

The verse says:

"And indeed the inhabitants of Hijr (also) rejected the messengers."

One can conclude from the Qur'anic term /mursalin/ (messengers) that 'the inhabitants of Hijr' had also some prophets other than Hadrat-i-Salih. Some commentators say as the rejection of one prophet is, in fact, the rejection of all prophets, hence the term /mursalin/ has been mentioned here in this verse.

Anyway, the Qur'an continues regarding 'the inhabitants of Hijr' by saying:

"And We presented Our signs to them, but they turned away from them."

The application of the sense 'turning away' in this verse indicates that they were not even ready to listen to the verses of Allah or to look at them.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 82 - 84

وَكَانُوا يَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتاً ءَامِنِينَ

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُصْبِحِينَ

فَمَآ أَغْنَي عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

82. "And they used to hew secure houses in the mountains."
83. "So the (violent) blast overtook them in the morning."
84. "And what they used to earn did not avail them."

Those people were quite heedless of theological issues and of religious matters, and paid no attention to such things. On the contrary, regarding their worldly life and livelihood, they were so earnest that they maximized the security of their houses by building and setting them up through cutting stones and rocks within the mountains.

The verse says:

"And they used to hew secure houses in the mountains."

It is astonishing that man maximized the security and whatever belongs to his fleeting worldly life so much, while he is extremely so negligent for his eternal and immortal life in the Hereafter that he sometimes is not even ready to listen to Allah's speech and is not predisposed to even to glance at His signs of communication.

After all, what can one expect from such a people? Expect for the 'Divine law of the survival of the fittest' and except for the abstinence from providing the right of continuing with one's life for those nations who are entirely corrupt and incite corruption. An exterminating catastrophe must be inflicted upon them and annihilate them altogether.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an asserts:

"So the (***violent***) ***blast overtook them in the morning."***

This blast was a death threatening thunderbolt which came down upon their houses and annihilated them. While they were inside those secured built houses.

The verse says:

"And what they used to earn did not avail them."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 85 - 86

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لآتِيَةٌ فَاصْفَحِ الصَّفْحَ الْجَمِيلَ

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلاَّقُ الْعَلِيمُ

85. "And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them two but with truth; and verily the Hour (***of resurrection***) ***is surely coming; then pardon you, with a gracious pardoning."***
86. "Verily your Lord, He is the Creator, the All-Knowing."

The Arabic term /safh/ is derived from /safhah/ which means 'face'. The Arabic phrase /fasfah-is-safh/ signifies 'turning one's face away from someone but not out of one's outrage but to do that for forgiving and overlooking in case of one's compassion and out of one's affections'.

Imam Rida (as) has commented upon the Qur'anic phrase /safh-in-jamil/ as 'forgiving without

inquisition, or with no taking to task’.

As man’s everlasting troubles and entanglements have their roots in his lack of ideology and correct system of beliefs and, briefly speaking, in his disbelief in the origin of existence and in the Resurrection Day, the Qur’an returns to the issues of ‘monotheism’ and of ‘resurrection’ after describing the situation of nations such as the people of Lot and the people of Shu‘ayb and that of Salih, those who were entangled in all of those afflictions.

It has referred to the issues of monotheism and resurrection both in a single verse, saying:

“And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them two but with truth...”

This, He has said about monotheism; then He proclaims in connection with resurrection that everybody will be given his reward therein.

The verse says:

“...and verily the Hour (***of resurrection***) ***is surely coming...”***

In pursuit of this goal, He commands His prophet to be lenient towards them when facing their obstinacies, ignorance, fanaticism, meddling and their intensive oppositions, and to overlook their sins and forgive them with a beautiful forgiveness which is not even coupled with any blame.

As you will not be in any need or require any violence in spite of the fact that you have got clear evidence for your call and messengership to which you are given mission to accomplish. Moreover, violence against the ignorant people will usually lead to further violence and their further fanatic behavior. Therefore, leniency and forgiveness is the best.

The verse continues saying:

“...then pardon you, with a gracious pardoning.”

In the end, in the following verse the Qur’an proclaims that He Who commands as to the forgiving, is the Lord Who is Educator, creative, and knowing.

He is aware that amnesty and forgiveness have a very great impact on the soul of the individuals and of the society, and have a tremendous impact on the attraction as well as on the development of the people. Therefore, putting into practice the commandment of /safh/ (remittal) should not appear as a burden to you.

It says:

“Verily your Lord, He is the Creator, the All-Knowing.”

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 87

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعاً مِنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْءَانَ الْعَظِيمَ

87. “And indeed We have given you seven of the oft-repeated (verses) (Surah Al-Hamd) and the Grand Qur’an.”

The Islamic quotations narrated by both Shi‘ite and Sunni scholars indicate that the objective of the Qur’anic phrase /sab‘an minal- ma ani/ (seven of the oft-repeated (verses)) is Surah Al-Hamd.

For this Surah is to be recited twice in every prayer, and it has been twice revealed. There has been mentioned in a quotation that Allah (s.w.t.) says He has separated Surah Al-Hamd into two parts between Himself and His servants. One part is in connection with Him, while the other part concerns His servants.

From the holy phrase /bismillah/ as far as /malik i yaumiddin/ is in connection with Allah, and from /’iyy aka na‘bud/, which is the expression of obedience in worshipping, seeking assistance, and invocation, relates to the servants.

Also, some have claimed that the objective in mind in /ma ani/ is the Qur’an itself. In this case, the above mentioned Qur’anic phrase means ‘seven verses from the Qur’an’ which is necessarily the same Surah Al-Hamd.

The reason for this idea is the verse which says:

“Allah has revealed the most beautiful Message in the form of a Book, consistent with itself (yet) repeating...”[2]

The Book the verses of which are similar, harmonious and repetitive.

The blissful Prophet (S) proclaimed:

“Whoever, upon whom Allah bestows the Qur’an, imagines such that another one has been bestowed something better than that, he has downgraded the magnificent (Qur’an) and has magnified a tiny (thing).”[3]

Anyway, Allah seeks to condole the Prophet (S) not to be terrified by the enemy’s violence, their density of population and the immense capabilities which are at their disposal, for Allah has made some blessings available to him with which nothing will match equally.

The verse says:

"And indeed We have given you seven of the oft-repeated** (**verses**) (**Surah Al-Hamd**) **and the Grand Qur'an."

Allah explains to His Prophet (S) this reality that he possesses a great capital, a capital such as the Qur'an which is as great as the entire world of existence, in particular, the Surah Al-Hamd which embodies such magnificent content that it joins man with Allah instantly and makes his soul bow and submit before Him, as well as invoking Him for help.

In Tafsir-i-Borhan, under this noble verse there is cited a quotation from Imam Muhammad-i-Baqir (as) who said: We are the objective of /ma ani/ which Allah has bestowed on our prophet, and we are Allah's countenance on the earth known among the people and the Shi'ah followers.

He who has known us, he is certain to believe in the origin of existence, resurrection and paradise, and he who is ignorant as regards us, he will surely face the Hell and Divine chastisement.

Explanations

Legislation is solely the prerogative of the Creator, and the laws of religious edicts must be based on 'creation'.

The principle of repetition in educational issues is a fundamental matter.

The word 'Oft-repeated' refers to the repetition of the revelation of the verses, the repetition of words, the repetition of stories, the repetition of Divine attributes, the repetition of verses of chastisement and of resurrection, the repetition of the fate of nations, the repetition of Divine blessings, the repetition of commandments, and the repetition of reciting the Qur'an.

Surah Al-Hamd is equivalent with the Qur'an, though the number of its verses amounts to seven.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 88

لاَ تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَي مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجاً مِّنْهُمْ وَلاَ تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

88. "**(**O' prophet!**) **Do not strain your eyes after what we have given certain classes of them to enjoy, and do not grieve for them, and lower your wing** (**of affection**) **unto the believers."

Warnings always do not follow the course of action. Rather, they sometimes precede and form as warning and preventive measures. The blissful Prophet (S) was never interested in the world of the unbelievers. Hence, Allah's dissuasion signifies warnings and serves as such, which causes dissuasion among other believers so as not to focus their eyes on the world of the pagans.

The blissful Prophet (S) has stated:

"He who focuses on what others hold or possess, his troubles increase and his distress will not be treated." [4]

One of the strict recommendations of the Qur'an to the Prophet (S) and the believers consists of recommendation as to leniency, mercifulness, and patience towards the faithful believers, among which one may name the instance when they should be patience with those who always call on their Lord and be modest and affectionate unto the believers.

Incidentally, the Arabic word /'azwaj/ includes both men and women. Some claim that this word means /'asn af/ (classes). That is, do not focus on the blessings which we have provided the classes of pagans with and do not consider them great while thinking about them.

For, the blessings which We have bestowed upon you and your followers, namely, your prophetic mission, the Qur'an, Islam, the conquest etc, are so far more in quantity and worth that they exceed all their blessings.

The verse says:

"(O' prophet!) Do not strain your eyes after what we have given certain classes of them to enjoy..."

And if the Quraysh pagans do not become believers and, as a consequence, will receive chastisement, do not grieve for them.

The verse continues saying:

"...and do not grieve for them..."

At the end of the verse, He issues His third command to the prophet about modesty, humbleness, and leniency towards those who are believers, when He says:

"...and lower your wing (of affection) unto the believers."

This sense is a beautiful ambiguous metaphorical allusion to modesty, affection, and friendliness as in the case of birds when they want to show their affection towards their chickens they cover them under their wings, where they provide us with the most existing emotional scene as they try to protect them against all sorts of accidents and enemies.

Therefore, all these are intended to show that leaders and prophets must be modest and humble with regard to the believers so that they follow him.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 89 - 91

وَقُلْ إِنّـِي أَنَا النَّذِيرُ الْمُبِينُ

كَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَي الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ

الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْءَانَ عِضِينَ

89. "And say: 'Verily I am the manifest Warner'."
90. "(We shall send them chastisement) as We sent down on the dividers."
91. "Those who made the Qur'an into shreds."

Similar to the case that leniency and affection with the believers and friends are necessary, being decisive against the opponents is also required, and decisiveness, threats and warnings are a necessity when one faces paganism.

Allah commanded the Prophet (S) to say if he warns them Allah has asserted the fact that He will send them that kind of chastisement which was sent to 'those who divided', the same ones who divided the Qur'an and the Divine verses into acceptable and none acceptable parts.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"And say: 'Verily I am the manifest Warner'."

"(We shall send them chastisement) as We sent down on the dividers."

They took up the Qur'an and accepted from it whatever was to their advantage and discarded whatever was to their disadvantage. But the true believers do not impose any kind of analysis, divisions or discrimination as regards the Divine commandments.

The verse says:

"Those who made the Qur'an into shreds."

There are three meanings mentioned in the commentaries for the Qur'anic term /muqtasimin/:

There were some chiefs of the unbelievers who during the days of Hajj pilgrimage used to divide forces at the crossroads and entrance gates of Mecca in order to tell the travelers that a person called Muhammad (S) has got certain claims and they should not listen to him. They introduced him as a soothsayer, a sorcerer, and a lunatic.

The second meaning points to those who divided the Holy Qur'an among themselves so as to produce each a simulation form of the Qur'an.

The third meaning refers to those persons who took certain parts of the Qur'an for practice while leaving the other parts as unpractical.

The Arabic word /'idin/ is either the plural of /'idah/ in the sense of 'quarrel and disputation', or it is derived from the word /'udw/ which means 'cutting into pieces'.

Incidentally, the retribution of those who divide the Holy Book in that form is the Divine punishment. A believer is the one who accepts the Qur'an in its entirely, saying that whatever has been revealed has come from the side of Allah.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 92 - 93

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

92. "So, by your Lord, We shall surely question them all (in the Hereafter),"
93. "As to what they used to do."

Following their state of unbelief as to the Qur'an and their dividing it, the Qur'an implies that they shall see the punishment for this evil act of theirs and will be questioned about it.

O' Mohammad (S) by your Lord We shall question them about it and We mean by interrogating them warning and blaming of them, that is, to convey to them this message as to why they committed sin. What proofs have they got to offer for having committed sins? They will then be target of all scandals.

The Qur'an says:

"So, by your Lord, We shall surely question them all (in the Hereafter),"

In this verse, Allah swears to Himself, presenting Himself as the Lord of Muhammad so as to prove his splendid position to the people.

Then it continues saying:

"As to what they used to do."

Incidentally, the subject in question in this verse is: We ask them what they worshipped and what

answer they would have to offer the prophets! They will have no answer!

And in general, the fact that attention is focused on interrogation and auditing of accounts in resurrection day and the fact that everybody is going to be asked questions regarding everything is itself one of the factors in the awakening process.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 94 – 96

فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

إِنَّا كَفَيْنَاكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِئِينَ

الَّذِينَ يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهاً ءَاخَرَ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

94. "Therefore, declare openly what you are bidden and turn you away from the polytheists."
95. "Verily We will suffice you against the scoffers,"
96. "Those who set up another god with Allah, so they will soon know (the truth)."

The Arabic term /sad'/ signifies splitting and exposing or exhibiting.

The blissful Prophet (S) engaged in propagation for three years in secret, and as the Qur'anic clause:

"***Therefore, declare openly what you are bidden***"

was revealed, he openly went on his invitation and he told the people if they accepted his call, their administrative government, and the splendor of this world and the world hereafter would be all theirs.

The verse says:

"Therefore, declare openly what you are bidden and turn you away from the polytheists."

However, they decided to be engaged in ridiculing and mocking that Divine Prophet and went to Abū-Talib , the uncle of the Prophet (S), to present their complaint.

They complained that Muhammad was seducing their youths. If Muhammad was after wealth, wife and high position, they were ready to provide him with them all. The Prophet (S) told his uncle:

"Dear uncle! My words are the Divine messages and I shall never give up preaching."

The pagans requested Abu-Talib to surrender Muhammad to them, but he did not condescend to the

request. 5

Anyway, Allah issues a decisive decree to the Prophet (S) in this noble verse, implying: you are here by instruction not only to stop letting any weakness, fear and numbness overtake you when facing the fuss and ado of the pagans, but you are also advised to openly declare your mission and what you are up to do, revealing the facts of the religion explicitly and turn away from the polytheists and remain headless with regard to them.

Afterwards, to provide reinforcement for the heart of the Prophet (S), Allah reassures him that He will back him up as against those who ridicule him. Allah implies: We shall remove the evil of those who ridicule you and We shall perish them.

The verse says:

"Verily We will suffice you against the scoffers,"

Allah then describes /mustahzi'in/ (those who ridicule), as: They are the ones who designate counterparts for Allah, but they will soon face the consequence of their evil behavior.

The verse says:

"Those who set up another god with Allah, so they will soon know (the truth)."

It may be that this meaning alludes to the fact that these are the ones whose thoughts and deeds are ridiculous by themselves, for they are so ignorant that they create god-like figures out of stones and wood as against Allah Who is the Creator of the world of existence, despite all of which they want to make an object of ridicule out of you.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 97 - 99

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

97. "And (O' prophet!) We certainly know your breast is straitened by what they say."
98. "Therefore, (to reinforce yourself), celebrate the praise of your Lord, and be of those who make prostration (unto Him)."

99. "And worship your Lord until the Certain comes to you."

Among the commentators it is well-known that the aim in mentioning /yaqin/ (certainty), in these verses, is the most certain of all that takes place with regard to man, that is, death. As it is also quoted from the tongue of the pagans in verses 46-47 of Surah Al-Muddaththir No. 74 saying that they used to reject the Day of Judgment till death overtook them.

The meaning of the Arabic word /yaqin/ is not death, of course, but death prepares the grounds for arriving at certainty, for at the time when death is forth coming, all curtains are drawn and man becomes certain of the realities.

Some deviants have made a pretext out of the verse and claim: if one arrives at the state of certainty, there is no more any need for worshipping, little knowing that it is the Prophet (S) who is being addressed and who had arrived at certainty from the earliest day and used to declare in face of inciting greed and threats of the pagans:

"If you place the moon into my one hand and the sun into another one, I shall not be stopped from performing my duty."

However, despite such a state of certainty, he used to worship till the last moments of his life.

Anyway, Allah adds as a console and as a reinforcement for elevating the spirit of the holy Prophet (S) in the noble verse:

"And (O' prophet!) We certainly know your breast is straitened by what they say."

Your delicate spirit and your very sensitive heart cannot withstand all those ill-intentioned words and blasphemous sentences, thus making you deeply depressed.

However, do not be disturbed; to remove the ill-effects of their nasty and inappropriate words, worship and praise your Lord, and remain one of those who prostrate.

The verse says:

"Therefore, (to reinforce yourself), celebrate the praise of your Lord, and be of those who make prostration (unto Him)."

For, such a gratitude shown towards Allah will remove the ill-effects of their words from the minds of the lovers of Allah. Moreover, it provides you with energy, ability, illumination and sincerity as well.

Some Islamic traditions denote that whenever the Prophet (S) became sad, he used to establish prayer by which he would wipe out the effects of that grief from his mind.

Therefore, The Lord gives him His last commandment in connection with this matter that he must not

give up worshipping Allah throughout his life and he (S) must keep on worshipping and serving Him till his certain death occurs.

The holy verse says:

"And worship your Lord until the Certain comes to you."

It is cited in Majma'-ul-Bayan that if Allah would say only: 'worship the Lord' and would not confine it to a certain limit in time, it was sufficient for man to worship Allah once and prove his servitude to Him. However, with this meaning, He convinces man to worship Allah as long as he is alive.

In conclusion, worshipping Him is the highest level of education; it provokes one's thought and calls one's way of thinking towards the endless boundaries.

It wipes out and washes away all the dust of sinfulness and negligence from one's heart and soul, while inculcating supreme human values within him. It strengthens one's faith and awareness, and makes one responsible in his affairs.

It is for this reason that it would be impossible to imagine that man might be needless of this great educational school for even one moment. Those who think man may reach a stage where he will be no more in need of worshipping, either have regarded man's development as a limited process, or they have not grasped the full meaning of worshipping.

1. Tafsir Majma'-ul Bayan
2. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 23
3. Tafsir-i-Kanz-ud-Daqh ayegh
4. Tafsir-us-Safi
5. Tafsir-Kanz-ud-Daqayiq

Surah An-Nahl, Chapter 16

Surah An-Nahl (The Bee)

No. 16 (Revealed in Mecca)

128 verses in 16 sections

Content of Surah An-Nahl

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

The sixteenth Surah of the Glorious Qur’an which contains 128 verses is called ‘Nahl’ ‘Bees’ owing to allusions made in it to the creation of bees.

Notwithstanding the Qur’an is a Book of Divine legislation, but many of its Suras are named based on creation, such as An–Najm (star), ‘Ash–Shams’ (the sun), ‘Al–Fil’ (the elephant), ‘Al–‘Ankabūt’ (spider), and ‘An–Nahl’ (the bee).

These names are clues as to the fact that all the creatures whether in the sky or on the earth, whether small or great, they are all equal to Him due to His Power, and the Book of legislation is based on the Book of nature, both of which have their sources in one origin.

One of the names of this Surah is ‘the Surah of the Blessings’ for there are the names of over 50 blessings mentioned in it.

The issues dealt with in this Surah are: the Divine blessings, reasons for monotheism and resurrection, ordinances concerning the Holy war, the threats against the pagans, the dissuasions of injustice, indecency, breaking of one’s promises, innovations, and satanical temptations.

Incidentally, most of the commentators are of the opinion that it is understood from the occasions of the revelation of the verses of this Surah that the first forty verses of it have been revealed at the end of the Meccan era, while the remaining eighty eight were revealed during the early period of the migration to Medina. Therefore, this holy Surah is both Meccan as well as Medinite.

The Virtues of Reading This Surah

In some quotations narrated from the Prophet (S), it has been confirmed that he said:

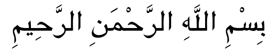
“He who recites this Surah, Allah will not hold him accountable for the blessings which He has bestowed on him in this world.”

All means will be made available to him to go to Paradise. [1]

Certainly, that kind of reading is meant hereby that is coupled with meditation and decision which leads one to practice and taking steps on the path of gratitude.

1. Tafsir–i–Burhan

Section 1: The Existence of Allah Proved by Nature



In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 1

أَتَي أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلاَ تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَي عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

1. "Allah's commandment has come, hence do not seek to hasten it. Glory be to Him and Exalted is He above every thing with which they associate Him."

A considerable part of the commencing verses of this Surah have been revealed in Mecca, during which time the Prophet (S) was intensively entangled with the pagans and idol-worshippers who used various pretexts every day for the liberating and life-saving call of Islam.

Among such pretexts one might name the Divine chastisement, which, whenever the Prophet (S) warned them against, some obstinate folks would declare.

"Why would such a chastisement which you claim, if truly said, do not come to be inflicted on us?"

They might sometimes add that if supposedly there was such a case impending, they should take recourse to their idols to serve as mediators with Allah (s.w.t.) to be rescued from punishment.

The first verse of this Surah drew an obliterating line over such imaginary claims by implying that they should stop making haste in that connection for Allah's commandment had definitely been issued already.

It says:

"Allah's commandment has come, hence do not seek to hasten it…"

If you think that the idols will be involved as mediators with Him, you are seriously mistaken, as Allah is far more intact and superior to being attached with associates.

The verse continues saying:

“...Glory be to Him and Exalted is He above every thing with which they associate Him.”

Explanation

Notwithstanding the case in question in this verse is the pagans’ impatience in their receiving of the Divine punishment, but the beginning sentence of the verse is not confined to the Divine punishment.

Rather, it includes all the Divine commandments such as that relating to waging of the Holy war, the commandment concerning the reappearance of the contemporary Imam (a.j.), the Return of the Immaculate Imams (as), and the commandment for the stepping up and staging of the resurrection day about which one must not make haste.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 2

يُنَزِّلُ الْمَلآئِكَةَ بِالْرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَي مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنذِرُوا اَنَّهُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنَاْ فَاتَّقُونِ

2. “He sends down the angels with the inspiration of His commandment upon whomever of His servants He wills as to warn (people) that there is no God but I, so be in awe of Me.”

The Arabic term /r�h/ refers to one of the Divine near-stationed angels the name of which is mentioned separately in the Qur’an and has come beside the word ‘the angels’:

“The Day (on which) the spirit (R�h) and the angels shall stand arrayed...” [1]

However, in the verse under discussion the letter /b/ (with) is employed between the two words used instead of the conjunction /wa/ (and). Perhaps, the meaning intended in this verse is not ‘that angel’ when dealing with /r�h/, but it may mean the literal sense of the word which is the spiritual life.

In this case the verse signifies: Allah sends down the angels along with the means of life to those servants whom He pleases; as is the case in verse 50 from Surah Ash-Shour a, where the word /r�h/ denotes the Qur’an which is the source of spiritual life.[2]

In any case, as no punishment and retribution will be inflicted on anyone without adequate explanation and without delivering a just ultimatum, the Qur’an implies that Allah sends down angels with the Divine spirit to those of His servants whom He wants, ordering them to awaken the people to the fact that there is no other one to be worshipped except Him.

Therefore, they should avoid any opposition to His commandments and feel responsible when confronting Him.

The verse says:

“He sends down the angels with the inspiration of His commandment upon whomever of His servants He wills as to warn (people) that there is no God but I, so be in awe of Me.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 3

خَلَقَ السَّماوَاتِ وَالاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ تَعَالَي عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

3. “He created the skies and the earth with the truth; Exalted is He above everything with which they associate Him.”

Here, the Qur’an selects two ways for dealing with the issue of the eradication of paganism and focusing all people’s attention on the One God.

First, He tackles the issue with rational reasoning regarding the magnificent order of creation and its system. Secondly, He tackles the issue through emotional ways and the explanation of the various blessings towards man and by instigating man’s sense of gratitude.

At first, it says:

“He created the skies and the earth with the truth...”

The rightfulness of creation of the skies and the earth is evident both when one considers the amazing system of well-regulated creation, and the goal and the various interests which exist in it.

Are those idols whom they associate with Him able to bring about such a creation process, or can they create a small mosquito or create a particle of dust?

The verse says:

“...Exalted is He above everything with which they associate Him.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 4

خَلَقَ الإِنسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ

4. “He created man out of semen, yet behold! He is an open adversary.”

After allusions made to the issue of the creation of the skies and the earth and their endless mysteries, He enters into the discussion of man himself; the man who is closer to Him than any other one.

The Qur’an in regard to man implies that: And eventually when he was a worthless sperm with no soul,

he was made into a rational being as well as defendant, expressive of his own interior, and engaging in disputations with foes. (This meaning refers to the different stages of man's development process!)

The other meaning attributed to this verse is that man eventually turned into Allah's enemy, rejecting his own Creator. (This alludes to the retrogression and meanness of the sinful ones.)

The verse says:

"He created man out of semen, yet behold! He is an open adversary."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 5

وَالأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنَافِعُ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ

5. "And He created the cattle for you, therein is warmth and (other) advantages, and of them you eat."

There are many advantages in animals for man. Their meat and milk serve for his food; their skin and wool serve for making shoes and clothing; their back serves for loading, their feet are utilized for cultivation, and even their feces are used for fertilization. In spite of all the above advantages, they cause the least trouble for man.

The verse says:

"And He created the cattle for you, therein is warmth and (other) advantages, and of them you eat."

In Islamic quotations, next to agriculture, the best job proposed is breeding live-stock. This has been mentioned on condition that the job is coupled with the payment of one's religious dues of Zakat and with an eye on the deprived people.

Incidentally, focusing one's attention on the divine blessings enlivens the love unto the Creator as well as the spirit of His servitude in man.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 6

وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ

6. "And there is beauty in them for you when you drive them (home in the evening), and when you send them forth to pasture (in the morning)."

The Qur’anic term /tasrah�n/ is derived from /saraha/ which signifies sending livestock to the pastureland; and the Arabic term /turih�n/, which is derived from /rauh/, means the time when the cattle return to their stable.

Allah, the Gracious, does not confine Himself to the mentioning of the ordinary advantages provided by the useful animals, but He also insists on the psychological benefits which can be drown out of them.

The verse says:

“And there is beauty in them for you when you drive them** (**home in the evening**)**, and when you send them forth to pasture** (**in the morning**)**.”

This, in fact, provides the beauty of the self-sufficiency for the society, as this is a way of the provision for the needs by a society which are to be fulfilled. In other words this provides a picture for the beauty laid out in the process for achieving economic independence as well as the stoppage of all source of dependence.

Explanations

The four-footed animals are (just like other creatures,) created for the sake of man.

Vegetarianism is not a value in itself. Allah recounts the eating of the meat of lawful animals as one of their advantages:

“…of them you eat.”

Certainly, indulgence in consumption of meat is not recommended.

The perfection of the glory of a society resides in its independence, self-sufficiency, production and expanding of its livestock breeding industry.

‘Beauty and decoration’ is one of the natural needs of the individual and society.

The perfection in beauty of a society rests with the struggle, and not with stagnation and impasse; the struggle which is achieved through mass movement, and not through individualistic achievements.

Beauty in perfection requires being of service to the people; it is not attained through only filling up of one’s own stomach.

That kind of beauty makes perfect in case of being under the umbrella of a shepherd which is coupled with one’s own wisdom, and not being left alone and to oneself.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 7

وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَي بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُوا بَالِغِيهِ إِلاَّ بِشِقِّ الاَنفُسِ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

7. "And they carry your heavy loads unto a land that you could not reach except with distress of (your) self. Verily your Lord is Compassionate, Merciful."

The Qur'an points out to another of the advantages of animals in this noble verse. It implies that animals carry your heavy loads on their back, going towards towns and regions which you could not reach without undergoing tremendous troubles.

The verse says:

"And they carry your heavy loads unto a land that you could not reach except with distress of (your) self..."

This is a sign of Mercy and compassion of Allah Who has created these four-footed animals with such tremendous strength, and has made them tamed and submissive to you.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily your Lord is Compassionate, Merciful."

As one may note, these four-footed animals, firstly, provide man with means for covering him against cold and heat. In the second place, their milk products are used and, then, their meat. And, finally, they provide those psychological effects which leave an impact on man's heart, and their use as a means of transportation.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 8

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

8. "And (He created) horses, and mules and donkeys that you may ride upon them, and for ornament, and He creates what you do not know."

The Qur'anic term /xayl/ means: 'pride, arrogance', but here, in this verse, the objective is 'horse', as if man feels a kind of pride and arrogance in horse riding.

The Arabic word /biq al/ signifies 'mule' which comes to being by a horse and a donkey; and the word /hamir/ is the plural from of /himar/ in the sense of 'ass'.

In this holy verse, the Qur'an points to some other animals which man uses for riding.

The verse says:

"And (He created) horses, and mules and donkeys that you may ride upon them, and for ornament..."

In conclusion, Allah points out to a more important issue and calls everybody's attention to the various means of transportation and mounts which will be made available to man in the future, and, which he can make better use of them.

And Allah will create other things that you know nothing about them, like the modern various means of transportation, whether be it cars, trains, or airplanes which are indeed Allah's creatures, not those of men.

The verse continues saying:

"...and He creates what you do not know."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 9

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَآئِرٌ وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

9. "And upon Allah is to show the right way, and of them (the ways) are the deviating ones; and if He had willed He could have guided all of you."

From among the affairs which Allah regards them as His Own obligations is leading people and providing them with proper guidance, as He remarks:

"Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide,"[3]

and again in this verse the Holy Qur'an states:

"And upon Allah is to show the right way..."

Here, the Qur'anic term /qasd/ signifies moderation, and the aim in referring to /qasd-us-sabil/ is the in-between way or the 'straight way'.

Anyway, in pursuing the various blessings, which were discussed in the previous verses, the Qur'an points out here to one of the most important spiritual blessings of them, when it implies that it is up to Allah to show the right and straight path to the people, a path which has no deviation found in it.

The verse says:

"And upon Allah is to show the right way…"

As for this 'straight path' which alludes to either the 'genetic' or the 'religious' dimension, the commentators have offered various interpretations. However, their ideas are not incompatible with each other if they include both cases.

On the other hand, Allah has sent the prophets equipping them with revelations, adequate instructions and regulations required by man, so that, from the religious laws point of view be able to discriminate the good from the evil and, by means of kind of statements, to persuade man to cover the straight way and refrain him from the deviate paths.

Afterwards, as there are many deviating paths, He warns human beings, implying that some of these paths are deviating and have dead ends.

The verse says:

"…and of them** (**the ways**) **are the deviating ones…"

And since the blessings of freedom of choice and free will are among the most important factors in man's perfection, the Qur'an refers to them with a short sentence and remarks in implication that if Allah wanted, He would lead all of you by compulsion to the straight path in such a way as you would not be able to deviate in the least from that path.

The verse continues saying:

"…and if He had willed He could have guided all of you."

But, He did not do that, for compulsory guidance is neither something which makes one proud; nor is it a development for him.

Anyway, Allah has not deemed it appropriate to make people believers by compulsion; on the contrary, He has left man free to choose his own path.

1. Surah An-Naba', No. 78, verse 38
2. "And thus did We reveal to you an inspired book by Our command."
3. Surah Al-Layl, No. 92, verse 12

Section 2: Allah's Unity Testified in Nature

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 10

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّماَءِ مَاءً لَكُم مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ

10. "He it is Who sends down water from the sky for you; from it you drink, and by it (grows) trees on which you pasture your cattle."

The Arabic term /tasim�n/ is derived from /'as amah/ and means letting animals graze in the pastureland; and the word /šajar/ in Arabic has a broad meaning which includes every type of plant, whether trees or bushes.

As Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 146, concerning pumpkins, says:

"And caused We to grow (to give shade) over him a plant of pumpkin.",

notwithstanding the fact that pumpkins have bushes and not trees.

At any rate, in this noble verse, the Qur'an again makes allusion to the material blessings so as to provoke men's sense of gratitude, to light the love of Allah in their hearts, and to call them to attain a wider cognition of the One Who has been granting them the blessings.

It says:

"He it is Who sends down water from the sky for you..."

It is the enlivening and freshening, pure, and transparent water which is free from all kinds of pollution and which is the source of drinking.

"...from it you drink..."

And there are plants and trees which grow out of it, and which forms pasturelands where you send your domestic animals for grazing. The verse continues saying:

"...and by it (grows) trees on which you pasture your cattle."

It is certain that the advantages of rainwater are not confined to drinking by man, enabling plants to grow and trees to flourish.

These advantages include the washing of the earth compounds, purification of the air, creating of the required moisture for freshness of man's skin, facilitating of one's breathing process, and the like. However, in view of the fact that the abovementioned two parts were of more importance, they have been emphasized far more than the other domains.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 11

يُنبِتُ لَكُم بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالأَعْنَابَ وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّـمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

11. "Therewith He causes to grow for you herbage, and the olives, and the palm trees, and the grapes, and of all the fruits. Verily there is a sign in this for a people who reflect."

One must note that to make something grow is the job of Allah and not farming it; and all kinds of fruits are created for man. So we must keep in mind that all products and fruits have a passing effect and they are not to be regarded as ends in themselves; they are proper signs and symbols leading towards the destination and are not to be regarded as destinations themselves.

The verse says:

"Therewith He causes to grow for you herbage, and the olives, and the palm trees, and the grapes, and of all the fruits..."

Certainly, only to see and to know does not suffice; but thinking and taking the appropriate measures are also necessary.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily there is a sign in this for a people who reflect."

Why Does He only Name Olives, Palm-trees and Grapes?

Perhaps it seems such that if the Qur'an stresses on fruits as olives, dates and grapes, it is because of the fact that their location in the environment of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an has been conducive to the growth of such fruits.

However, considering the fact that the Holy Qur'an has been a universal and an eternal phenomenon and given note to the depth of its interpretation, it becomes obvious that the issue goes beyond such limits.

Nutrition scientists remark that there are few fruits the excellence of which can match nutritionally these three fruits. They also claim that olive oil can produce excellent fuel for bodily activities. Its quantity of calories is enormous for which it is regarded as energizing, and those who always seek to keep healthy, must become interested in this.

Olive oil is friendly towards one's liver; while, at the same time, it is effective in removing the ill conditions of kidneys, biliary stones, lithiasis, nephritic colic and hepatic colic, as well as removing of constipation syndromes.

With the progress of medical sciences and nutrition and food sciences, the pharmaceutical effects of dates have also been adequately proved.

There is calcium in dates which is the prime factor for the strengthening of bones, and there is also phosphorus in dates which is the principal source and element which constitutes brain and inhibits weakness of nerves and fatigue syndromes.

It also increases the power of one's eyesight. Dates also possess potassium, the absence of which in one's body results in stomach ulcer. It is very useful for one's muscles, and human body tissues.

The fact that dates prevent cancer is nowadays widely circulated among nutrition scientists.

As for the grapes, according to nutrition scientists, they are so effective in numerous ways that one can regard them as a naturally established pharmacy or pharmaceutical laboratory.[1] Grapes produce twice as much heat in one's body as meat.

Moreover, they counterattack poison and play a host of other roles as purifying ones blood, removing of rheumatism, goat, and the increase in urea in one's blood stream. Grapes polish one's stomach and intestines and are activating, and they remove one's depression. They reinforce one's nerves and strengthen man because of their various vitamins.

Therefore, the stress which the Qur'an lays on these three fruits is not groundless. Probably, some important parts of it have been unknown to the people at that time.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 12

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

12. "And He** (**has**) **made the night and the day, and the sun and the moon subservient for you, and the stars have been made subservient by His command. Verily there are signs in this for a people who understand."

The objective of the conquest of the sun and the moon is man's manipulation of them for his own advantage. Otherwise, man who is not able to create even a fly, how would he be able to conquer the sun. By His grace, Allah, the Almighty, has made them subservient for man.

At any rate, alluding to the blessings offered to man by Allah in man's conquest of the various beings in the world, the Qur'an remarks:

"And He** (**has**) **made the night and the day, and the sun and the moon subservient for you, and the stars have been made subservient by His command..."

Most certainly, there are signs and clues of the grandeur of Allah (s.w.t.) and the magnificence of creation for those who contemplate.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily there are signs in this for a people who understand."

In the meantime, the hierarchical order of the system of existence is solely attracting the attention and are the object of development of those individuals who are thinking as well as reasoning, and not for those with naively-thinking, and those who are simple-minded.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 13

وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفاً أَلْوَانُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

13. "And (also) whatever He has produced for you on the earth of different colours; verily there is a sign in this for a people who take advice."

The varieties of hues in existence are nothing but signs of the Power and Wisdom of Allah. Of course, He has created them for humankind. Hence, Allah declares in this noble verse, implying that the creatures which He has created for you on the earth have also been made subservient to you as well, various creatures and of different coloring.

The verse says:

"And (also) whatever He has produced for you on the earth of different colours..."

They are from different coverings, foods, clean spouses, and well-fare means to different mines and underground useful sources as well as other over-ground ones plus other blessings.

In these, there are also signs which are evident for those who are reminded in these matters as well.

The verse says:

"...verily there is a sign in this for a people who take advice."

Reflection, Reasoning, Reminding

In the above verses, after calling people to three parts of the Divine blessings, He invites people to the act of reflection.

However, in one case He points out that 'There are signs in these for those who reflect'. In another case He reiterates that there are signs for those who reason, while in the third case He declares that there are

signs for those who remember.

Such a wide range of differences in senses does not certainly reflect some technical maneuvering in expression. Conversely, out of what we grasp from the methodology of the Qur'an, each has got a different point of reference.

Maybe, the note on such difference points out to the case of varieties of the existing blessings in the world are so obvious that the mere fact of mentioning may be sufficient.

However, in case of agriculture, olives, palm trees, grapes and the fruits in general, they require reflection so that one gets more acquainted with their nutritional and therapeutic qualities. Therefore, He makes allusion to reflection and points it out.

As for the conquest of the sun and the moon as well as stars along with the secrets of the day and night, there is need for further thinking. Thus, He refers to 'reasoning' which ranks higher in the hierarchy of the ladder of contemplation.

In any case, the Qur'an always addresses the enlightened, meditating, think tank individuals who have got highly sophisticated brains and reasoning despite the fact that the Qur'an has been appeared in an environment where ruled naught but ignorance.

One thus concludes the magnanimity of such meanings. In particular when facing those who negate the truly authentic religions altogether. Crossing them out who, because of some superstitious religions, claim that religions, in general, put one's meditation channels out of work. They claim that having faith in Allah is the product of ignorance.

Such Qur'anic verses are almost found throughout all of the suras.

The Qur'an explicitly states that the truly authentic religion is the product of meditation, reflection, and reasoning, and Islam addresses the intellectuals, the reflecting people and the men of knowledge everywhere, and not those who are ignorant, superstitious or the seemingly enlightened ones who have got no solid logical framework.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 14

وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْماً طَرِيّاً وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَي الْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

14. "And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh meat from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful."

The sea has got an important role to play in man's life. The seawater is the source of steam, clouds and rain.

The depth of the sea provides man with the most delicious food, fishes, and its surface provides the cheapest, and the most widespread lines of transportation for cargo and passengers. All of the above advantages have been made possible through the policies and powers of the Almighty, and man has got no role to play in bringing them about.

The verse says:

"And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh meat from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful."

The Arabic term /mawaxir/ is the plural form of /m axirah/ which is derived from /maxr/ and it signifies splitting from all sides, the left side as well as the right side.

Explanations

The sea, with all its magnanimity and despite all its ebbs and flows, is subject and subservient to man and is at his disposal.

"And He it is Who has made the sea subservient..."

The seas provide the most important source of fresh and healthy meat.

"...that you may eat fresh meat from it..."

Allah provides man not only with the means of primary needs, such as water and food, but also He provides him even with ornamental materials as well; in a manner: So as you would be able to exploit the precious gems of the seas with deep-sea diving for the sake of your dressing as well as the dressing of your wives.

"...and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear..."

The seas provide man with the best of natural ornaments.

The general laws with regard to the sea animals are concerned with their categorization as being religiously 'lawful meat' for eating, unless there is a law as not being allowed for a specific reason.

Freshness of meat is a value in itself.

Although man ought to struggle for obtaining food, his sustenance depends on Allah.

"...and that you may seek of His bounty..."

All of one’s success must be targeted in order that sense of gratitude may be awakened.

“...and that you may be grateful.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 15

وَأَلْقي فِي الاَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَاراً وَسُبُلاً لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

15. “And He has cast firm mountains in the earth that it does not quake with you, and streams and roads that you may be guided aright,”

Mountains provide sources of equilibrium and comfort for man. The Arabic term /mayd/ means ‘movement towards the right and left directions, as well as tension’.

The Qur’anic sentence /’an tamida bikum/ (that it does not quake with you) signifies that mountains are the cause of one’s peace of mind as well as preventing of earth quakes. Hadrat Ali (as), with regard to mountains, says:

“Allah rendered the earth in a sustaining form by fixing in it gigantic stones and firm mountains.”[2]

The foundations of the mountains have penetrated in all of the ups and downs of the earth and are geared into its holes.

The verse says:

“And He has cast firm mountains in the earth that it does not quake with you, and streams and roads that you may be guided aright,”

As the tension of the earth requires gigantic mountains to keep it sustaining, the tension found among the inhabitants of the earth also requires up-straight and Godly figures so that they can serve as causes of peace of mind in the people of the society.

Some Islamic quotations indicate that Allah (s.w.t.) made the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the Prophet of Islam (as) as the pillars of the earth so as to rescue the inhabitants of the earth from anxiety and tension.[3]

In the meantime, mountains play an important role in man’s life. They store the winter snow amidst their outskirts which serve as the sources of streams and canals in springtime and with their variety of shapes they can serve as the road signs for guiding the travelers. We can grasp this meaning once we suppose that the entire earth were flat and soft.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 16

وَعَلاَمَاتٍ وبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ

16. "And landmarks (too), and by the star they find the right way."

We need landmarks for moving in the deserts and finding our way. The natural signs guide us during day-time and the stars lead us by night, to both of which Allah makes allusions in this verse.

It says:

"And landmarks (too), and by the star they find the right way."

We do not only need signs for finding our right way from circumlocution roads which lead us astray, but we also need clear signs for knowing the right from wrong in the midst of our desires, instincts, and of the despotic methods of dictators.

The Prophet (S) has designated and assigned some symbols to know the truth after him when people need it and when they are wandering aimlessly by looking at them.

In many quotations from the immaculate Im ams (as) we have it that /najm/ (star) is interpreted as the Prophet (S) and /'al am at/ (symbols) is interpreted as the Imams, in which case we have reference made to the spiritual commentary of this verse of the Qur'an.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition has said:

"The 'star' reflects the Messenger of Allah, and 'symbols' alludes to the Imams (as)"

And Imam Sadiq (as) also states:

"We are the symbols".

One of the best examples and cases of those so-called 'symbols' are Hadrat Zahra, and Imam Husayn (as). 4

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 17

أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لاَّ يَخْلُقُ أَفَلاَ تَذَكَّرُونَ

17. "Is He then Who creates as he who does not create? Do you not then consider?"

From the onset of the Surah Nahl as far as here, the Qur'an has recounted the Divine blessings in 15 verses.

It draws a general conclusion in this verse and explains the issue in an interrogative form implying whether He then Who creates is on a par with or equal to those idols and despots who are lacking in power to create. Why is it that you search for them instead of turning to the Almighty?

The verse says:

"Is He then Who creates as he who does not create?..."

After the discussion of all those great blessings and the hidden graces of Allah, the Qur'an addresses the conscience of the human beings and states:

"Is He then Who creates as he who does not create? Do you not then consider?"

Should one prostrate before the Creator of all such blessings or should one prostrate before those beings which are only tiny creatures themselves and who have never created anything and are not creating anything at the present?

This is an effective educational method which the Qur'an has employed in various circumstances. It raises the issues in an interrogative form and leaves their answers to the awakened consciences while appealing to the sense of spontaneity of he people.

In conclusion, theology and the worship of the Almighty is embedded in the nature of all human beings; what is needed is reminding them of it.

"...Do you not then consider?"

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 18

وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لاَ تُحْصُوهَآ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

18. "And if you count Allah's blessings, you are unable to number them. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Finally, in order to let no one think that the favors of Allah are confined to those things only, the Qur'an states:

"And if you count Allah's blessings, you are unable to number them..."

Now, this question arises as to how can we express our gratitude to Him which we owe Him? In this case, are we not among those who are ungrateful?

The Qur'an provides the answer to this question in the last sentence of this verse, saying:

"...Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Certainly, Allah is more compassionate and more lenient than you may think of Him to take actions in questioning or in punishing you for your inability to express your thanks for His blessings.

You would better know this much that you are head over heel intermingled in His Graces and you are unable to express due recognition for His favors, and you should pay Him the apology that you always owe Him for your shortcoming in order to fulfill your duty in thanking Him. It is in this case that you have performed your utmost thankfulness to Him.

Who is he the one who affords to express his gratitude adequately to Him. That servant does best who offers his apology to Him for the sins he has committed. Otherwise, what can best suit Him is utterly impossible to be performed by anyone.

However, all these obstacles cannot obstruct us or stand in our way to keep account of His bounties and graces as far as we can, and thus be grateful to Him.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 19

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ

19. "And Allah knows that which you conceal and that which you reveal."

Allah's knowledge as to all affairs, whether open or covert, is identical, and if we know that Allah is fully aware of whatever we do, we seek to lead a virtuous life. Definitely, Allah knows as to what our intentions and objectives might be.

The verse says:

"And Allah knows that which you conceal and that which you reveal."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 20

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لاَ يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ

20. "And those they call on besides Allah do not create anything and they are themselves created."

The Holy Qur'an stresses the issue of creativity once again, implying: Those whom they worship other

than Allah, not only they do not create anything but also they themselves are created ones.

The verse says:

"And those they call on besides Allah do not create anything and they are themselves created."

The issue in question has so far been that these are not the creators and for this reason they are not worth worshipping. Now the Qur'an declares that they are themselves created and needy as well.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 21

أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَآءٍ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ

*21. "(**They are**) **dead, not alive, and they do not know when they will be raised."***

As the worshippers of the idols used to manufacture idols in the shape of man, and they used to treat them as if they were conscious beings, therefore, Allah in this verse calls the idols as dead ones which are used for the conscious living beings.

All beings except Allah are regarded as dead, whether be it inanimate ones or human beings from the point of being worshipped.

The verse says:

*"(**They are**) **dead, not alive, and they do not know when they will be raised."***

This is the fifth characteristic which the worshipped one must possess, and which the idols are lacking.

Idols and idolatry have got a wide range of meanings in the logic of the Qur'an. Whomever and whatever is juxtaposed as against Allah in respect to its leaning and supporting power and we imagine in whose hands our destiny is laid, that will be regarded as an idol for us.

It is for this reason that whatever is mentioned in the above verses are in connection with those who claim apparently seem to be worshippers of Allah, but they have lost the independence of a faithful and truthful believer, leaning on the support of some weak subjects on whom they count for their livelihood, they are the target of them.

1. The book entitled: 'The First Court and the Last Prophet', Chapter: Grapes and Dates.
2. Nahjul-Bal aqah, Sermon 91
3. N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 44
4. Tafsir-ul-Burhan

Section 3: God of all is only One

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 22

إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَالَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مُنكِرَةٌ وَهُم مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ

22. "Your God is One God. Hence, those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts are repulsive, and they are arrogant."

Your Lord is One God, unique and no one else is able to be the creator of the blessings. Therefore, stick to the rules of His worship.

The verse says:

"Your God is One God..."

Those who disbelieve in the Hereafter, their hearts deny the truth and they refrain from accepting admonitions and advices. Such ones are those who are arrogant and refrain from submission to the truth. They go on disobeying it without having any grounds for what they do.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...Hence, those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts are repulsive, and they are arrogant."

Explanations

The previous verses dealt with the ability of Allah and the inability of all others relating to the act of creation and lack of their awareness about the future. This verse stresses the fact that your real Lord is Allah, One God.

The Arabic term /kibr/ signifies 'megalomania' or regarding of one's own self as greater than what one is. The word /takabbur/ means putting into practice or implementation of the attributes of being megalomaniac.

The Arabic word /'istikb ar/ also denotes that one is not great in itself but wants to create and prove his grandeur and splendor by whatever means which are usually at his disposal.

Some Islamic quotations indicate that Imam Husayn (as) once was passing by a group of impoverished needy people who were having their meals. They invited him to join them.

The Imam (as) accepted their invitation and sat down next to them, engaging in eating, then he said:

"Allah does not love the arrogant."[1]

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 23

لاَ جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ

23. "Undoubtedly Allah does know that which they conceal and that which they reveal. Verily He does not love the arrogant."

The Arabic word /jarama/ means 'picking of and cutting fruits from the trees'. The term /l ajarama/ signifies that the issue in question is not to be 'cut', 'taken away' or such that one can be skeptic about. Conversely, it is something certain and decisive.

This verse serves two functions: It threatens the pagans warning them all as to the awareness of Allah of their performances, and, at the same time, it carries the good news unto the believers about the fact that Allah is aware of the situation of their enemies and can punish them as well.

This noble verse also stresses once again on Allah's knowledge of the invisible and His intuition of what is open and hidden, saying that Allah is definitely aware of what they make manifest as well as what they hide away. This sentence is in fact a threat against the pagans and the foes of the Truth about which Allah is never unaware.

The verse says:

"Undoubtedly Allah does know that which they conceal and that which they reveal..."

They are arrogant and Allah does not love the arrogant, for arrogance, when facing the Truth, is considered as the first sign of one's alienation from Allah.

The verse says:

"...Verily He does not love the arrogant."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 24

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم مَّاذَآ أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الاَوَّلِينَ

24. "And when they are asked: 'What has your Lord sent down?' They say: 'The legends of the ancients'."

The Arabic term /’as atir/ is the plural form of /’ust�rah/ which signifies the stories and superstitious fables which have been turned into written forms.

Or, it may be the plural form of /’ast ar/ which means lines that have been copied in duplicated forms from the previous books. This word has been quoted nine times in the Qur’an from the pagan’s tongue in all cases of which they have been accompanied by the word /’awwalin/ meaning the ‘first one’s’. That is, they would say:

“These words are nothing new; they are contrarily, those expressed or rather fabricated by the predecessors.”

In the previous verse, the discussion concentrated on those who were arrogant. The usual logic of these disbelievers is reflected in this verse which implies that when they are asked as to what their Lord has revealed, they answer that these are not the Divine revelations; they are the same false stories of the predecessors.

The verse says:

“And when they are asked: ‘What has your Lord sent down?’ They say: ‘The legends of the ancients’.”

It is interesting to note that the arrogant today usually mischievously appeal to this way of escaping the truth in order to mislead others. In some books concerning sociology, they have turned to even putting their deceptive ideas into a scientific framework and claim that ‘religion’ is the product of man’s ignorance and religious interpretations are confined to ‘fables’ only.

However, they do not organize any campaigns against the superstitious and fabricated religions. Their opposition is only concentrated around true religions which seek to awaken people’s minds, breaking up of the policies of colonialism and of obstructing the way of the expansionists and colonialists.

In conclusion, the sending of the prophets (as) and of the Celestial Books are among the Lordly acts for the education and guidance of the people.

But, the habit of the arrogant people is to despise and humiliate whether be it sometimes the school, at other times the leader, or the entire nation.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 25

لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ أَلاَ سَآءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ

25. “That they must bear their burdens entirely on the Day of Resurrection and (also) some of the

burdens of those whom they lead astray without knowledge. Beware! Evil is it what they bear!"

This verse deals with the pioneers of paganism who, in this life, lead the people astray with their falsified propaganda. Therefore, in the Hereafter they must shoulder the burden of their own sins as well as those whom they have seduced and caused to deviate from the straight path.

As some Islamic quotations indicate: He who founds a deviating path, must share the punishment of all those who are deviants in it; and he who leads others in the right direction will also share in the rewards accorded to those who are seeking the truth without being at a disadvantage as far as his own share is concerned; and beware that the former are shouldering the worst kind of responsibilities.

The holy verse says:

"That they must bear their burdens entirely on the Day of Resurrection and (***also***) ***some of the burdens of those whom they lead astray without knowledge. Beware! Evil is it what they bear!"***

The reason why this case happens is that their word will sometimes seduce thousands of people. How difficult it is that one adds to his own punishment by suffering not only for his own sins but also sharing in the sins of thousands of others.

Moreover, when their misleading words stay and serve as sources of the seduction of future generations, they will also have to suffer for their sins which are extra to those of their own.

Incidentally, the cause of most deviations is ignorance, and the enemy utilizes that ignorance to achieve his own goals. Nevertheless, ignorance cannot serve as an excuse and does not acquit one from the punishment for his guilt.

1. N□r-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary, vol. 3, p. 47

Section 4: The Disgrace Which the Wicked Shall Have

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 26

قَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَي اللَّهُ بُنْيَانَهُم مِنَ الْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

26. “Indeed, those who were before them (also) devised plans. So (the wrath of Allah) struck at the foundations of their buildings, and then the roof fell on them from above them, and the (Divine) punishment came to them from whence they never perceived.”

This noble verse discusses the point that it is not the first occasion when the arrogant accuse the Divine leaders, and consider the Divine revelations as old fables. On the contrary, those who preceded them also devised such conspiracies. Nevertheless, Allah hit the foundations of their life, destroying it from the scratch and thus their roof fell on them from above.

The verse says:

“Indeed, those who were before them (also) devised plans. So (the wrath of Allah) struck at the foundations of their buildings, and then the roof fell on them from above them…”

And Allah’s punishment came upon them from where they could never have the slightest idea.

The holy verse continues saying:

“…and the (Divine) punishment came to them from whence they never perceived.”

The total destruction of the foundations of the buildings and the falling down of the roofs might be taken as allusions made to the buildings and their apparent roofs which were pounded and devastated as a result of earthquakes and thunderbolts, falling over them.

It might just as well be reference metaphorically to their organizational hierarchy which was eradicated by Allah’s command.

Incidentally, it is not incompatible that the verse refers to both meanings.

Explanations

To eradicate the entire mental and organizational system of the enemies, one must deal with them fundamentally and not superficially so that all of them might be vanished.

At times, it happens that a building, with very solid foundations, turns into one’s own grave instead of serving as a place for his preservation.

In the meantime, this holy verse serves as a threat to the conspirators while serving as a way of providing calm and comfort for the Prophet (S).

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 27

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تُشَآقُّونَ فِيهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ إِنَّ الْخِزْيَ الْيَوْمَ وَالسُّوءَ

عَلَي الْكَافِرِينَ

27. "Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them and say: 'Where are My associates for whose sake you have been disputing?' Those who have been given the knowledge will say: 'Verily, the disgrace and scandal are this day upon the unbelievers."

Knowledge and ignorance have some broader meanings in the context of the Qur'an than the general meanings which are ascribed to them.

A knowledgeable person, in the Qur'anic context, is the one whose thinking and practice are based on the truth even though he may have no command of reading and writing. An ignorant fellow, on the other hand, is he whose actions are based on what is wrong even though he might have mastery of all the subjects of science.

The Qur'an regards the notion of paganism and worshipping of idols as utter ignorance, as it regards the root of the heinous act of the people of Lot as ignorance.

In this verse, also

"Those Who have been given knowledge"

addresses those who are facing against unbelief and paganism. That is, true knowledge leads and directs man to Monotheism and Faith.

In the meantime, what was mentioned about them in the previous verse was regarding their punishment in this world, which does not end at this point. Besides that, Allah will bring them disgrace, shame and scandal in the Resurrection Day.

The verse says:

"Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them..."

Addressing them, He puts this question to them asking: Where are those whom you fabricated as associates for Me, used to love them and you had hostile attitudes towards others for their sake?

It continues:

"...and say: 'Where are My associates for whose sake you have been disputing?'..."

Most definitely, they shall have no answers here for this question. Nevertheless, those who have been given knowledge, including the angels, prophets and the believers, open their mouth asserting: Shamefulness, scandal and ill-fate are to-day incumbent upon 'the unbelievers'.

(Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn and 'Atyab-ul-Bayan)

This itself will be a type of punishment and psychological chastisement for them.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 28

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلآئِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ فَأَلْقَوُا السَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِن سُوءٍ بَلَى إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا كُنتُم تَعْمَلُونَ

28. "Those whom the angels take their lives while they are unjust to themselves. Then they would offer submission, (***falsely saying:***) ***'We used not to commit any evil act'. 'Nay; Allah is definitely aware of what you used to do'."***

The unbelievers do both at the time when angels are taking their life: They offer their submission and they deny their evil past. However, neither that faith, to which they confess is of any kind of value, for it has its origin in 'necessity'; nor is their denial acceptable from them, for Allah is always aware of everything.

This noble verse with its particular interpretation, which provides a thought-provoking instructive lesson for awakening the ignorant and those who are unaware, describes the pagan as follows:

"Those whom the angels of death take their lives, while they are unjust to themselves..."

For, whatever tyranny one inflicts on others, it will first of all start with himself, and he will ruin his own house before that of the others.

Nonetheless when man finds himself in his deathbed, and the curtains of his own arrogance and negligence are removed from before his eyes, he will immediately offer his submission, falsely claiming that he has not done anything wrong.

The verse says:

"...Then they would offer submission, (***falsely saying:***) ***'We used not to commit any evil act'..."***

Are they telling lies because, as a result of their habitual repetition, lying has become their inherent characteristic? Or else, they want to say that they know such acts which they have committed have been mistakes. It is probable that the two cases might be involved and both hold true.

Nevertheless, they are soon reminded that they are liars and that they have committed many evil acts, saying that Allah is aware of whatever they have done as well as their intentions under all circumstances.

The verse says:

"...'Nay; Allah is definitely aware of what you used to do'."

Therefore, there is no room for them to deny or refute! And this ‘emergency faith’ of theirs, which is instantly expressed for pragmatic reasons, is of no use either.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 29

فَادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَي الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

29. “Therefore, enter through the gates of Hell, to abide therein. Thus, indeed, evil is the abode of the arrogant.”

Then, enter Hell through its gates where you will always be staying. Note what an awful place is the residence of the arrogant people.

They have not voluntarily entered the inferno! On the contrary, they have been made enter into it.

There are seven gates for the Hell according to the text of the Qur’an, each of which belongs to one category of the seven categories in the Hell.

The Qur’an says:

“It has seven gates, for every gate there shall be a (separate) party of them assigned.”[1]

This verse does not signify that they can enter through whichever gate they choose. On the contrary, it means that every class of those sinners can enter through one of the gates according to their intensity of: paganism, disbelief or profanity, opposition or hostility, their intensity of being misled, seductive ability, and oppression as well as the like of them.

For example: the Jews will enter through one gate while the Christians enter through another gate; the pagans enter through their own particular gate-way whereas the dissidents have their own gate; so on and so forth. The gateway of the seventh floor belongs to the hypocrites and those who were unjust unto the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the Messenger (S).

The hell is incidentally the dark prison of Allah in which all kinds of punishments for chastising the evil doers are found, including: Fire, yoke, chains, vertical means of stabbing, lashes, ‘Hamim’ (boiling drink), Ghassaq (pus), Zaqqūm (bitter drink), and the like.

May Allah keep us away from these means of torture and punishment, and let us enter His Garden of Eden, Paradise; Amen.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 30

وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَآ أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا خَيْراً لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَلَدَارُ الآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ ﴿30﴾ الْمُتَّقِينَ

30. "And (when) those who keep from evil are asked: 'What has your Lord sent down?' They say: 'Good!' Goodness is for those who do 'good' in this world; and certainly the abode of the Hereafter is better, and excellent indeed is the abode of the pious."

In the early days of Islam, those who had heard the names of the Qur'an and the Prophet, when they entered Mecca, they would ask various people they confronted

"What has your Lord descended?"

In answer to them, the pagans would say: *"The old legends",* while the believers would answer them: "***Good!***", meaning He has descended whatever is the source of 'good' and 'happiness'.

We have noted in the previous verses the remarks made by the pagans about the Qur'an. We shall focus our attention here on the beliefs of the faithful along with the consequences of their faith.

At first, the Qur'an implies that when the pious were asked as to what their Lord has descended, they would answer '*The good and happiness.*'

The verse says:

"And (when) those who keep from evil are asked: 'What has your Lord sent down?' They say: 'Good!'..."

What an explicit, beautiful and comprehensive sense it is! 'The good' and, in particular, in its absolute concept of the word, the comprehensive meaning of which encompasses all the decent acts, happiness and successes, whether material or spiritual.

To sum up, as in the case of the pagans through previous verses which have explained their increasing punishment, spiritual, material, worldly and that of the Hereafter, the concluding remarks made by the believers are as follow in the verse in question:
where it says:

"...Goodness is for those who do 'good' in this world..."

It is worth noting that the Qur'anic term /hasanah/ is just like /xayr/ 'the good' which encompasses all kinds of 'decencies' as well as the 'blessings', which are found in this world.

Such are their worldly rewards. Moreover, it emphasizes the fact that: their abode in Hereafter is even better than their worldly life. What a nice place it is the residence of those who are pious.

The verse says:

"...and certainly the abode of the Hereafter is better, and excellent indeed is the abode of the pious."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 31

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الاَنْهَارُ لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَآءُونَ كَذَلِكَ يَجْزِي اللَّهُ الْمُتَّقِينَ

31. "Gardens of Eternity they shall enter, therein beneath (the trees of) which rivers flow, wherein they will have whatever they desire for. Thus Allah rewards the pious."

The reward for abstinence from the forbidden pleasures of this world is the unending success in the Hereafter.

In this noble verse, the residence of the pious, which was briefly alluded to before, is being discussed, saying that the residence of the pious are the eternal gardens of Paradise into which all enter, where flowing streams pass beneath its trees.

The verse says:

"Gardens of Eternity they shall enter, therein beneath (the trees of) which rivers flow..."

The issue in question is not merely the gardens and the trees, but for them there are all things which please them at their disposal.

The verse continues:

"...wherein they will have whatever they desire for..."

In conclusion, it states at the end of the verse:

"...Thus Allah rewards the pious."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 32

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْملآئِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُونَ سَلاَمٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُم تَعْمَلُونَ

32. "Those whom the angels cause to die (***while from polytheism and sin***) ***are clean, saying*** (***to them***)***: 'Peace be upon you! Enter the Paradise because of what you used to do'."***

The objective in using the Qur'anic term /tayyibin/, which was formerly used in the previous verses with regard to the pagans and the disbelievers, concerns those who have not already been of the polytheists and sinful ones, and it refers to those who are pious.

The term /tayyib/ alludes to those who are clean from all kinds of dirt and pollution or 'impurity' and are decorated with virtues and positive attributes.

In the previous holy verses, we read as to how the angels of death usually take the life of the arrogant pagans while they are oppressors.

Here, in this noble verse, we read as to how the angels would take the life of those who are clean of everything and are clear of all oppressions, arrogance, and every kind of sin.

In this verse, the angels, addressing them, say:

"***peace be upon you!***"

That kind of 'peace' which is uttered as a mark or a sign of respect, security, safety as a thorough peace of mind.

The verse says:

"Those whom the angels cause to die (***while from polytheism and sin***) ***are clean, saying*** (***to them***)***: 'Peace be upon you!..."***

Then, afterwards, the angels will add:

"...Enter the Paradise because of what you used to do'."

Here, the Arabic phrase /tatawaff ahum/, meaning that 'they will receive their soul', signifies the fact that death does not mean 'mortality' and nothingness or the end of every thing. On the contrary, it is only a transit or a passing stage which paves the way for climbing up the ladder and going up to another stage.

Traditions on the Qualifications of the Paradise and Hell

1- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"All blessings are perishable except the ones which belong to those who reside in Paradise, and all depressions are temporary except the ones which belong to those who are the dwellers of Hell." [2]

2- Ibn-Abbas (r.h.) says:

“Those in Paradise will go through an hour during which time they witness the sun and the moon and ask:

‘Did Allah not promise that we shall not see the sun and the moon in our residence in Paradise’?

To which an oracle will exclaim:

‘Your Lord has promised you truly that you would no more see the sun and the moon in Paradise. But, that light beam belongs to a man from among the followers of Ali-Ibn-i-Abi-Talib (as) who is going from one compartment into another one, and that which you have been exposed to has been (the rays of) the light out of his face.’” [3]

3- Abū-Sa‘id says:

“The Messenger of Allah (S) said: A man from the dwellers of Paradise, of high-ranking position, comes upon those residing in Paradise and illuminates the entire Paradise. It is as if his face brightens everywhere like a brilliant star.”[4]

4- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Verily the dwellers of Paradise will witness those compartment-dwellers from above their head just like you observing the morning star which has been left in the horizon to the east or to the west.” [5]

5- The Prophet of Islam (S) said:

“There are certain (blessings) in the Paradise which neither any eyes have seen nor anyone’s ears have heard; nor has it been revealed to any man’s heart.”

Some Traditions on the Attributes of Hell

6- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The least torment for the people of Hell on the day of resurrection will be to make them put on a pair of shoes made of fire which will cause their brains to boil because of the intensity of their heat.” [6]

7- It has been narrated from Amir-ul-Mu’mineen, Ali (as) who said:

“Be in owe of that kind of fire the heat of which is excessive, the depth of which is intensive, the ornament of which is of iron, and the drinks of it consist of warm sewage made up of blood mixed with puss.” [7]

8- It has been quoted from Imam Sadiq, the sixth Imam (as), in a tradition that the Hell has got seven gateways; through one of which our enemies and those who take up arms against us and humiliate us will enter. This gateway is most definitely the largest and the most burning of all gateways. [8]

9- It has also been quoted from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

“Verily there exists a desert in the Hell for the arrogant which is named /saqar/. The excessive and intensive heat of it will be the main cause of their complaint when they will ask Allah to allow it to breathe, then He will allow it, so it will breathe and put the Hell on fire.” 9

10. ‘Ayyashi quoted from Imam Sadiq (as) who narrated from his father and his grandfather who have quoted in turn from Amir-ul-Mu’mineen (as) saying:

“At the time when ‘Zaqq�m’ (*a tree in Hell out of which the hell-dwelling people feed themselves*) *and ‘Zari‘’* (*a substance in hell which is bitter, stinking and burning*) *boils up in their stomach in Hell, those people will ask for a drink, then they will be provided with the drink of ‘Ghassaq and Sadid’, which are in turn made up of sewage secretions mixed with abscess secretion and blood.*

They will thus be made to drink the dirty liquid consistently, which would not quench their thirst. They aspire towards death, though they will not die so as to be made to receive terrible punishment the fullest.”

The Qur’an says:

“He will drink it little by little which he can hardly swallow agreeably, and death will come to him from every side, while he will not be about to die, and there will be a severe chastisement before him.”10

11- The blissful Prophet (S) asked the people:

“Shall I not tell you about the people of Paradise?”

They answered:

“Of course, O’, Messenger of Allah (*S*)*.”*

He said:

“The people of Paradise are the ones whom the people in this world have regarded as weak ones and humiliated them. Were they to swear to Allah to anything, Allah would thereon take them into account.”

Then he said:

“Shall I not tell you about the people of Hell?’

They said:

“Yes”.

He said:

“They are the hostile, stupid, nonsensical, vociferous, uncharitable wealthy people, (*who are*) *tyrants.”* 11

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 33

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلاَّ أَن تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلآئِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ رَبّـِكَ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

33. “Do they expect aught but the angels (***of death***) ***come to them, or the decree of your Lord comes*** (***to pass***)***? Thus did those before them. And Allah was not unjust to them, but they were unjust to themselves.”***

Were the warnings provided by the prophets not to awaken the people, the lashes of chastisement would surely do that job. However, to what effect will it be?

The descending of punishment after the delivering of an ultimatum, and sending prophets with Books, not only is not unjust but also is identical with the realization of justice in particular following the assigning of the prophets on their mission.

Once again, analyzing the attitudes and procedures of the pagans and oppressors, the Qur’an takes up the issue with a threatening vocabulary, and implies: What kind of expectations do they have?

Do they expect to receive any other things except that the death angels call upon them, while the ‘gates’ leading to repentance close up to their faces, their records be rolled up, and there remain no bridges for their return?

The verse says:

“Do they expect aught but the angels (***of death***) ***come to them…”***

Or else, do they keep waiting for Allah’s command to be issued as to their chastisement and then they seek repentance? Nonetheless, their repentance is untimely belated at that time and hence ineffective.

The verse continues saying:

“…or the decree of your Lord comes (***to pass***)***?…”***

Then, the Qur’an implies that those who undertake such acts are not confined to this group only. Contrarily, those who preceded them acted in just the same way.

It says:

“...Thus did those before them...”

It is not Allah Who did them injustice; however, it is they who did that to themselves, for they reap what they have sowed.

The verse says:

“...And Allah was not unjust to them, but they were unjust to themselves.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 34

فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

34. “So the evil (consequences) of what they did afflicted them and that which they used to ridicule encompassed them.”

The Qur’anic term /sayyi’ah/ signifies petty and minor sins as compared to the capital sins, like what Surah An-Nisa’, No. 4, verse 31 says:

“If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden, We remit from you your small sins...”

Therefore, whatever of chastisement is afflicted on man in this world is only the retribution of part of what has been due to him for his evil actions and the principal punishment will be saved for the Day of Resurrection.

The Qur’anic phrase /haqa bihim/ is in the sense of /halla bihim/ which in fact signifies: ‘whatever they mocked and ridiculed were reflected and returned upon themselves’.

In this noble verse, the Qur’an deals once again with the consequences of their performances, stating: The viciousness of their evil performances was returned to them.

The Qur’an says:

“So the evil (consequences) of what they did afflicted them...”

And the promises and pledges of the Divine chastisement were afflicted on them which were already the subject and the main issues of their mockery and ridicule. The verse continues saying:

“...and that which they used to ridicule encompassed them.”

The above verse once again emphasizes the fact that it is man’s own deeds, acts and performances which will entangle him, getting him involved both in this world and in the next and they will be reflected in various forms and shapes, and which will serve him as a source of trouble, harm, and torture, and not

any other thing.

1. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 44
2. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, vol. 14, p. 474
3. Bihar, vol. 8, p. 149
4. Kanz-ul-Ummal, vol. 14, p. 468
5. Kanz-ul-Ummal, vol. 14, p. 475
6. Mahhaja-tul-Bayza’, vol. 8, p. 356
7. Bihar, vol. 8, p. 206, from Nahj-ul-Balaqha
8. Bihar, vol. 8, p. 285
9. Mahajjat-ul-Bayda’, vol. 8, p. 361
10. Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 17
11. Sahih-i-Muslim, vol. 4, p. 2190

Section 5: Every People Had the Guidance through an Apostle from Allah

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 35

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ نَحْنُ وَلآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلاَ حَرَّمْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَهَلْ عَلَي الرُّسُلِ إِلاَّ الْبَلاَغُ الْمُبِينُ

35. “And those who associate (other gods with Allah) say: ‘If Allah had willed, we would not have worshipped aught besides Him, neither we nor our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything without (command from) Him.’ Thus did those before them. Is aught for the Messengers, but to deliver the manifest message?”

The issue of determinism and fatalism is one of the unsound justifications of the polytheists who claimed that Allah has predetermined us to worship other than Him. Had He determined otherwise we would not have been pagans.

This issue has been discussed in verse 148 of Surah Al-’An‘am, No. 6 and verse 2 of Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, also quoted from the pagans.

The verse says:

“And those who associate (other gods with Allah) say: ‘If Allah had willed, we would not have worshipped aught besides Him, neither we nor our fathers, nor would we have prohibited

anything without (command from) Him.'..."

Question: Does it not reflect Allah's condescending and consent to and with the matter, as He does not obstruct people from deviation?

Answer: Definitely not, for Allah has simultaneously made adequate means for the guidance of the people. He has sent prophets and Books. Therefore, He has not decided that any one should deviate. At the same time, He has not compelled any one to embrace the faith, for compulsory faith is of no use.

However, what is more dangerous than paganism and disbelief is the justification provided for it and its ascription to Allah.

It is like the case with the deviants who tend to provide justification not only for their deeds but they also seek to justify those wrong acts of their ancestors as well as their collaborators. Such a mode of behavior, that is, providing justification, is the task incumbent upon all those who have been deviants throughout history.

The verse continues saying:

"...Thus did those before them. Is aught for the Messengers, but to deliver the manifest message?"

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 36

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولاً أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَي اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُم مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلاَلَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الاَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

36. "And verily We have appointed a messenger in every nation (to say): 'Serve Allah and shun false gods.' Then, of them were some whom Allah guided, and there were others against whom error was due. Hence, travel in the earth, then see what was the end of the rejecters."

The Arabic term /'ummah/ is a derivative of the word /'umm/ which signifies something which takes up something else on itself. Every group of people who has got something in common and are unified in a sense is called, /'ummah/.

The Arabic term /taq�t/ (dictator or despot) is employed when someone wants to exaggerate or overstress the act of 'unruliness'. In the Holy Qur'an, the Satan, the oppressors, the tyrants and the idols, who are unruly and disobedient in face of Allah's commandments, are called /taq�t/. This word has got no plural form; it is used both as singular, like:

"...whoever rejects false deity (tagh�t)...", [1]

which is used as singular, and like:

"…their guardians are false deities* (*taghūt*)*…"[2]

which is used in plural meaning.

Allah has provided means of guidance for all the people.

The above verse says:

"And verily We have appointed a messenger in every nation* (*to say*)*: 'Serve Allah and shun false gods.'…"

Nevertheless, some groups accept the fact of the matter and will be guided aright, while others deny or reject it and, therefore, are misled. Thus, it is He Who guides us though it is us who are misled.

The verse continues saying:

"…Then, of them were some whom Allah guided, and there were others against whom error was due…"

An interesting example of this case might be the example of the earth which rotates around the sun during the rotation of which part of it faces the sun and is being enlightened while the other part of it, which is in behind, is darkened. Hence, one can say that every light beam which the earth possesses comes from the sun while every dark spot it has is of its own position.

Anyway, Allah does not ascribe misguidance to Himself, unless man personally paves the grounds for it.

In conclusion, at the end of the holy verse, He issues this general command for awakening of those who are misled and for the reinforcement of those who are already guided, where He implies that you may travel through the earth and examine the remains and relics of your predecessors which are on the surface of the earth or are buried under the earth and note for yourselves the ultimate destiny of those who have rejected Allah and their eventual fate.

The verse says:

"…Hence, travel in the earth, then see what was the end of the rejecters."

This meaning serves as a clear evidence for man's free will, for in case that the guidance and being misled were compulsory matters, there would certainly be no reasons for His commendation of traveling through the earth and the examination of the circumstances of the predecessors which would all be in vain.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 37

إِن تَحْرِصْ عَلَي هُدَاهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَهْدِي مَن يُضِلُّ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

37. "(O' Prophet!) Even if you desire for their guidance, yet verily Allah does not guide those whom He leads astray, nor shall they have any helpers."

In pursuance of the previous verse which ascertained that the deviation of a certain group is an irrevocable and an unequivocal matter owing to their paganism and rejection, this verse, addressing the Prophet (S), implies that he should not sympathize with them for his sympathy is ineffective as Allah has sealed their hearts because of their deviation and they would be no more having the capacity to be guided.

The verse says:

"(O' Prophet!) Even if you desire for their guidance, yet verily Allah does not guide those whom He leads astray, nor shall they have any helpers."

Sometimes, there is difficulty in people's eligibility for guidance which must not be attributed to the preacher. The Divine prophet is immaculate and he shows no weak-points while he has best quality ethics and is compassionate as well, yet some people do not approve.

Certainly, man sometimes reaches a point where he neither will be eligible to be guided in this world; nor will he have the capacity of being interceded and assisted in the next world.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 38

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لاَ يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ بَلَي وَعْداً عَلَيْهِ حَقّاً وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

38. "And they swore by Allah with their most earnest oaths (that) Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yea! It (raising the dead) is a promise binding on Him in truth, but most people do not know."

It is quoted that a Muslim man, who was indebted to by a pagan, went to him to claim his due. The pagan acted evasively which made the Muslim man infuriated and made this oath in his speech:

"*I swear to whatever I expect after death*"

He meant the resurrection and Allah's account, to which the pagan replied: "*I swear to God that He will raise no one from the dead.*" Upon this, the verse was revealed which embodied an answer to him and

to the ones like him.

Allah, the Almighty, deals with another type of their deviation and ill ways of thinking, indicating that they swear to the Lord vehemently, exaggerating with utmost insistence that He does not raise any one from the dead, and meaning that generally no one will be enlivened and revived after death.

The holy verse says:

“And they swore by Allah with their most earnest oaths (that) Allah will not raise up him who dies…”

Here, Allah, rejecting their speech, implies that: of course, Allah will revive them and will reappoint them.

This is the unequivocal promise which Allah has given them, and it is incumbent on Him to fulfill all His promises because of His wisdom, for His promise is truthful and is irrevocable, as were there no Resurrection Day to be held, duties of men would be meaningless.

In other words, once duties are correctly in place that there are punishment and rewards designated for one’s actions.

However, most people do not draw proper conclusions from this fact because of their paganism and rejection of the prophets. Some claim that those who do not follow the philosophy of the resurrection and rebirth of the dead, therefore they reject.

Two Points

One of the capital sins is swearing for false causes especially when the issue in question begins with the terms: /wallah/, /billah/ and /tallah/, which are the three terms for swearing.

According to the quotations which have been mentioned in the books of Roudah-Kafi, N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, and Tafsir-i-Burhan from Imam Sadiq (as) and Hadrat-i-Imam Baqir (as), it has been quoted that one of the examples of this verse is ‘regression’ or ‘return’ during the course of which, in this world, Allah enlivens some groups during the era of the revolution or uprising of Imam-i-Zaman (as) though the opponents of Shi‘ites refute that.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 39

لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَاذِبِينَ

39. “(They will be raised up) so that He may make clear to them that which they differed about, and that those who disbelieved might know that they (themselves) were liars.”

The pagans were hesitant and disagreed on such issues as monotheism, legitimacy and authenticity of the prophets' mission, resurrection day, and the accountability of one's deeds.

This holy verse proclaims that all these issues will be clarified for them in the resurrection day and they will discover as to what untrue and unacceptable beliefs they were holding in the world. But to what effect will it be?

It is for this reason that Allah raises them from the dead so as to enable them to see for them what they rejected and disagreed on, for the doomsday makes them acquire positively decisive knowledge.

Another point is that the pagans become aware that they were lairs in this world and their claim as to the fact that Allah will not make the dead rise up after death was utter nonsense and groundless.

The verse says:

"(They will be raised up) so that He may make clear to them that which they differed about, and that those who disbelieved might know that they (themselves) were liars."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 40

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَآ أَرَدْنَاهُ أَن نَّقُولَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ

40. "Verily, only Our word for a thing, when We intend it, is that We say: 'Be!', and it is."

Allah has remarked in this verse

"***Verily, only Our word***"

and in verse 82 of Surah Yasin No. 36, He has stated:

"***Verily only His command***"

while we find in verse 59 of 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, concerning the creation of Hadrat-i-'Issa, He says:

"...He said to him 'Be' and he 'was'.",

all of which lead us to the conclusion that His command and His speech are identical with His Will.

The Qur'anic word /kun/ signifies 'be' which is used for promoting our understanding of the proximity in our frame of mind. Otherwise, Allah does not require that either.

As man can imagine anything in his own mind whenever he intends to, which he can do without him needing anything. He can create everything. To excuse the similitude expressed here, Allah can also

create everything though His creation is real and it is done only if He so wills.

Therefore, He takes up the issue in this verse that if they consider the return of man to life impossible, they must know that Allah's power is above everything else. Whenever He intends something to exist, He only says 'Be it', following which it will immediately exist.

The verse says:

"Verily, only Our word for a thing, when We intend it, is that We say: 'Be!', and it is."

Despite this all-embracing power which Allah possesses in creation every thing by intending it, how could one still be skeptical as to the Allah's power in matters regarding resurrection of the dead after their death?

The expression of /kun/ (Be) which is the imperative form of 'to be' is also due to the scarcity of the words and their lack of capacity for better expression, in which case there is no need even for uttering such a word either. His Will is more than adequate for the actualization of everything.

Therefore, how can one doubt as to the issue of resurrection despite the fact that Allah's Will is utterly sufficient to bring everything into existence.

1. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 256
2. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 257

Section 6: To Seek Guidance from the People of the Qur'an

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 41

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلأَجْرُ الآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

41. "And those who migrated in Allah's cause after they had been oppressed, undoubtedly We will give them a good abode in this world, and certainly the reward in the Hereafter is much greater, if they know (this);"

Occasion of Revelation

As for the occasion of the revelation of this verse and the following one, it is quoted that some groups of

Muslims like 'Bilal', ''Ammar', 'Sahib' and 'Khab ab' fell under great pressure in Mecca after they embraced Islam, and after the migration of the Prophet (S), they went to Medina for the strengthening of Islam and for propagating their religion to others.

Among them Sahib, who was an elderly man, proposed to the pagans of Mecca to confiscate all of his property in exchange for allowing him to go to Medina, to which they agreed.

The above verse was revealed which reiterated the victory for him and for the ones like him in this world and the next.

The Reward of the Emigrants

In pursuance of the previous verses, which dealt with those who rejected the resurrection as well as the obstinate pagans, this verse deals with the true Emigrants, so as to make the situation of the two groups clear as compared to each other.

At first, He proclaims that those who went on exodus after being oppressed for the sake of Allah undoubtedly will be given a decent abode in this world, for they gave up everything they had with utmost sincerity for the propagation of Islam.

The verse says:

"And those who migrated in Allah's cause after they had been oppressed, undoubtedly We will give them a good abode in this world..."

This reward is given to them for this world; and if they know, they shall have greater rewards for the world to come.

The verse continues saying:

"...and certainly the reward in the Hereafter is much greater, if they know (this);"

At the end, migration, perseverance and trust are the codes of conduct for victory over the enemies, and one must rely on his own resistance, trust, and faith whenever confronting the oppressors and he should not rely on the powers and forces of external foreign sources.

Hence, those who give up their belongings and homeland and go on exodus while preserving their own lives for the propagation of religion, will benefit most.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 42

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَي رَبّـِهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

42. "Those who endured patiently and on their Lord did they rely."

The Qur'an describes these true, steadfast emigrants who are truly faithful with perseverance by two attributes in this noble verse, saying:

"Those who endured patiently and on their Lord did they rely."

Some Traditions

1. Imam Baqir (as) said:

"Patience is of two categories: Patience upon calamities, which is good and beautiful; and the best of the two is the patience in avoiding of the prohibitions." 1

2. The Prophet said:

"Patience is the best mount. Allah has not provided any servant with sustenance better and wider than patience." 2

3. Ali (as) said:

*"Patience is the best repeller of affliction."*3

4. Also, Ali (as) said:

*"O' people! Be patient, because he who has not patience has not religion."*4

5. The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"He who loves to be the most virtuous of the people, then he must rely on Allah." 5

6. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"The best of the servants with Allah is the one who mostly relies on Him and obeys Him." 6

7. Imam Rida (as) was asked about the limit of reliance. He said:

"It is that you do not fear any one other than Allah."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 43

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلاَّ رِجَالاً نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُم لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

43. "And We did not send before you except men unto whom We revealed; So ask the people of

'Thikr'* (*the Qur'an*) *if you do not know,"

At this time, addressing the Prophet (S), the Qur'an asserts that Allah did not send anyone before him except those individuals from mankind whose hearts were illuminated with the light of Divine revelation. That is, they were just like him in divine messengership benefiting from revelation and in the capacity of being His own envoys.

This matter was raised in answer to the pagans of Mecca who rejected the prophetic mission of man. Allah points out that the prophet must be of the people's own equals so that they can see him and talk to him and, finally, understand his words. Therefore, in such a case, it is not appropriate that instead of a man, an angel be appointed as a messenger to carry out the prophetic mission.

The verse says:

"And We did not send before you except men unto whom We revealed; So ask the people of 'Thikr'* (*the Qur'an*) *if you do not know,"

In other words, He recounts in this verse: We did not send before you, O' Mohammad (S), anyone to any nation but the cases confirmed and equipped with Our revelation, to which your people raise objections as to why it is that their prophet is not an angel who is from among the human kind.

Declare that they seek the truth out by referring to the Ahl-uth-Thikr, the knowledgeable people and the scientists of each nation, if they are unable to put questions concerning issues to all prophets who belong to the human kind.

According to Ibn Abbas, the object of 'Ahl-uth-Thikr' are the Christian and Jewish scholars in this context; that is: were they doubtful as to the truth of the matter, they would better refer to the people of Turat, and the nation of the Bible for the clarification of the issues.

These words are addressed to the pagans, for the news which the Jews and the Christians provided them with, out of their Books, were acceptable to them while rejecting the words of the Prophet (S), owing to their intensive hostility. Some, however, claim that 'Ahl-uth-Thikr' signifies the 'followers of the Qur'an,' because /thikr/ means 'the Qur'an'.

Jabir-Ibn-i-Yazid and Muhammad Ibn-i-Muslim, quoting Imam-Mohammad-i-Baqir (as) state that he has proclaimed:

"We are 'Ahl-uth-Thikr'.[7]

To sum up, this noble verse deals with a general universal principle which is acceptable by human reason, and it is referring of whatever one is not knowledgeable about to the experts in that field.

That is, for whatever you do not know, you may ask the knowledgeable ones. Certainly, the best

example in religious issues is the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the Prophet (S) who can provide the point of reference.

There are numerous quotations as to the validity of this point in the Shi'ite as well as the Sunni literature which have been dealt with extensively in the third volume of Mulhaqat-i-'Ihq aq-ul-Haqq p.p. 482, onwards.

Tabari, Ibn-i-Kathir, and ' All�si have also pointed out that 'Ahl-uth-Thikr' is the same and identical with 'Ahl-ul-Bayt' in their commentaries beneath this verse. We also have it that H afiz Muhammad Ibn-i-Mu'min-i-ShiRazi has mentioned the same matter in 'Mustakhraj' when discussing the 'position' of the 'Ahl-ul-Bayt'.

Again, in vol. 23 of Bihar, pages 172 onwards, there have been quoted about 60 quotations concerning this issue, through some of which the Immaculate Imams have confirmed that:

"Swearing by Allah, it is we who are the 'Ahl-uth-Thikr', the responsible, (to whom the people must put their questions)."

Therefore, one must turn to the specialists in the Qur'anic sciences, namely, the Ahl-ul-Bayt for ones inquiry regarding his religious and ideological questions, who are experts in the field of the Qur'anic knowledge and not at random turn to whoever has got a superficial knowledge of Islam.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 44

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

44. "(We sent the prophets before you) with clear proofs (miracles) and (celestial) Books and We sent down to you the 'Thikr' (the Reminder, Qur'an) that you may make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them, that they may reflect."

The Arabic term /bayyin at/ signifies clear evidences of the prophetic mission and miracles; and the word /zubur/ is the plural form of /zab�r/ which means 'Celestial Book'. The verse probably refers to two kinds of revelation, one of which is the Qur'an, which belongs to all the people.

The other one is aimed at the interpretation and explanation of the Qur'an, and which is particular and exclusive to the Prophet (S). It signifies that We sent you the 'Thikr', so as you explain the interpretation and commentary of the Qur'an which has been descended for the people.

Therefore, the prophets have had both miracles and Divine Book, so that the people do not get mixed up between right and wrong.

The verse says:

“(We sent the prophets before you) with clear proofs (miracles) and (celestial) Books...”

Therefore, Allah implies in the Qur’an that: If you are unaware, ask those who are knowledgeable about the clear evidences and the Books of the previous prophets.

It is in this way that the question of specialization has been recognized as having a sound basis in the Holy Qur’an. Furthermore, it has been the only way of acceptance or rejection in all fields, on the basis of which, all Muslims are required to have access to knowledgeable and learned people in all fields who are honest at all times and places for their reference.

Turning to the Prophet (S) later, He declares that We thus revealed to you this ‘Thikr’ (the Qur’an) so that you explain to them what is descended to the people, so that they meditate upon these verses and on their duties which are incumbent upon them.

The verse says:

“...and We sent down to you the ‘Thikr’ (the Reminder, Qur’an) that you may make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them, that they may reflect.”

In fact, your call and your mission are not in principle a novelty or an unprecedented matter. It is just in the same manner which We revealed the Books to the previous prophets so as to make the people acquainted with their duties towards Allah, their own selves, and the other people.

Just in the same way We also revealed this Qur’an to you so that you engage in the explanation of its didactic lessons, thus awakening mankind to meditate.

Therefore, it is the duty of the Prophet (S) to explain the Qur’an and it is the duty of the people to accept those explanations on the basis of their sound thinking, for the Qur’an is ‘Thikr’, ‘reminder’ and, at the same time, it is a way of mentioning and calling man’s attention, while distancing him from the core of negligence, oblivion and erroneous behavior.

Surah An-Nahl – Verses 45 - 47

أَفَأَمِنَ الَّذِينَ مَكَرُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَن يَخْسِفَ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الأَرْضَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ فِي تَقَلُّبِهِمْ فَمَا هُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ

أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ عَلَي تَخَوُّفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

45. “Do then those who devise evil (plots) feel secure (of this) that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up, or that the wrath will not come upon them from whence they do not perceive?”
46. “Or that He may not seize them during their movement, so that they shall not frustrate (Allah’s wrath).”
47. “Or that He will not seize them in the state of fear, for verily your Lord is certainly Compassionate, Merciful.”

Allah, the Almighty, in these noble verses, has mentioned four kinds of punishment for the conspirators against the religion:

Punishment on the earth:

“Allah will cause the earth to swallow them up.”

Celestial punishment:

“The wrath will come upon them”

Sudden punishment:

“He may seize them during their movement.”

Spiritual punishment:

“He will seize them in the state of fear.”

He, the Mighty, has pointed out the above punishments so as to make the conspirators against religion aware that certainly their tricks become null and void when confronted the Divine power.

Different Kinds of Punishment for Various Sins

The Qur’an deals with the demonstrative materials and emotional questions, intermingling them in such a way that they make the utmost impact on the audience.

The previous verses dealt with a logical discussion regarding the issues of the prophetic mission and resurrection in connection with the pagans. In here, it concerns itself with the threatening of the oppressors and the tyrants as well as the obstinate sinners, and rather scares them with the different types of the Divine punishments.

At first, it raises the question whether those conspirators who tried to put out the light of the truth with their evil plans feel safe and secure from Allah’s making the earth swallow them.

The verse says:

“Do then those who devise evil (plots) feel secure (of this) that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up...”

Is it a remote possibility that a terrible earthquake strikes the earth, splitting the crust of the earth, opening it up and swallowing them all with all their belongings, as was the case repeatedly with the previous nations?

Then, it adds: Or when they are in a negligent mood, the Divine punishment overtakes them from whence they never perceive?

The verse continues saying:

“...or that the wrath will not come upon them from whence they do not perceive?”

Or, as they struggle for accumulating more wealth and increasing more income, the Divine punishment strikes them hard, while they are unable to escape the consequences of their punishment?

The verse says:

“Or that He may not seize them during their movement, so that they shall not frustrate (Allah’s wrath).”

Or else, the Divine punishment does not strike them all of a sudden; it strikes them on a gradual basis and along with consecutive warnings.

The verse says:

“Or that He will not seize them in the state of fear, for verily your Lord is certainly compassionate and Merciful.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 48

أَوَ لَم يَرَوْا إِلَي مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ يَتَفَيَّؤُا ظِلاَلُهُ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَالشَّمَآئِلِ سُجَّداً لِلَّهِ وَهُمْ دَاخِرُونَ

48. “Have they not seen all things that Allah has created the shadows of which spread from right and left, prostrating (before Allah) while they are humble?”

The Arabic term /fi‘/ refers to the shadow in the afternoon which is reversing; while the term /zill/ refers to any kinds of shadow.

The Qur’anic word /d axir/ signifies ‘humble’, and it is most probable that the aim in stating ‘the right side’ and ‘the north side’; in the verse it refers to the two sides of the day, namely, morning and evening. Perhaps, because shadow spreads on the earth, the expression of prostration is applied for it, though

from the point of creation, all beings are prostrating and humble before Allah.

At any rate, the Qur'an implies in this verse whether those pagans who reject the Oneness of Allah and refute His blessed Prophet (S) do not observe the trees, mountains, shadow-casting objects and buildings which are the created things of Allah and cast their shadows to their right and sometimes to their left-side?

For, at dawn, if man stands facing the 'qiblah' his shadow will be cast in front of him, after dawn, it falls to his right side and, in the late noon, his shadow will be reflected behind him, while at sunset, it falls on his left side.

This is the meaning of the shadows turning to one's right and to the one's left side. This interpretation belongs to Kalbi who remarks that when the Qur'an states that shadows prostrate before Allah, it means that shadows are in obeisance and obey the rules of Allah and their turnings and rotations are not achieved in accordance to their own will.

This verse is like verse 15, Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13 which says:

"And whoever is in the skies and on the earth prostrates willingly or unwillingly, and (***so do***) ***their shadows in the mornings and the evenings."***

So the Qur'anic phrase /wa hum d axir?n/ signifies that they are mean and humiliated.

The verse says:

"Have they not seen all things that Allah has created the shadows of which spread from right and left, prostrating (***before Allah***) ***while they are humble?"***

Thus, Allah wants to make us understand that all beings, living and inanimate, are humble before Him because of their needs for their Omnipotent and Wise Creator. That is: because if He tends to be slow in affairs, all 'frames and modes of behavior' will collapse and perish. Therefore, all beings, just like mankind, are prostrating and humble before Him.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 49

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَالْمَلآئِكَةُ وَهُمْ لاَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

49. "And whatever is in the skies and whatever is in the earth, whether (***moving***) ***creatures and angels, prostrate before Allah*** (***only***) ***and they do not pride."***

The Arabic term /dabbah/ refers to that living being which moves from a place to another place. This word is used in the cases of 'man', 'animals' and 'jinns'. However, it is not used for 'angels'.

The aim in stating the prostration of all beings, earthly or celestial, is either their genetic humbleness before the laws of existence, or it might be a prostration emanating from their consciousness and understanding, in which case, the latter interpretation is apparently intended, though it is beyond our understanding.

In other words, all beings which are in the skies and all those which are on the earth, prostrate before Allah. The intention in stating /min dabbah/ (whatever moves) is those earthly beings which move or come and go on the surface of the earth.

The angels also prostrate before the magnanimity of Allah and worship Him. The Qur'an mentions the angels apart from other beings so as to glorify their position. Another point to be considered is that the word /dabbah/ is applied to those beings which move and which come and go. However, we must keep in mind that the angels have got wings and can fly as well.

The verse says:

"And whatever is in the skies and whatever is in the earth, whether** (**moving**) **creatures and angels, prostrate before Allah** (**only**) **and they do not pride."

The Qur'anic sentence /wa hum l a yastakbir□n/ signifies that the angels do never abstain from the worshipping of Allah and they never show an arrogant attitude. This sentence qualifies the angels, for it is the angels who do not show the least arrogance in humbleness and prostration before Allah.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 50

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

50. "They fear their Lord** (**supreme**) **from above them, and they do what they are commanded."

The angels are utterly subservient towards Allah. Our fear of Allah is because of the sins which we have committed. However, the fear of the angels of Allah has its roots in the magnitude and splendor of Allah.

It is for this reason that the Qur'an says in this verse:

"They fear their Lord** (**supreme**) **from above them, and they do what they are commanded."

The reason why the Qur'anic phrase /min fauqihim/ 'from above them' has been used is for two aspects:

One side to this issue is that they fear the punishment of Allah, which, in such cases, is mostly inflicted from above one's head.

Allah is qualified as being superior and being above everything else in power and perfection, and He all–

encompasses in Guardianship and in 'Omnipotence' over all celestial and earthly possible beings. Therefore, the above-mentioned interpretation is suitable.

One can, therefore, conclude from this holy verse that there are two signs for the negation of oppression: Fear when confronting responsibilities, and the execution of Allah's commandments without any questioning.

Therefore, if all beings, like angels, are humble and God-fearing, and prostrate before Allah, why should we human beings not prostrate before Him and go on oppressing others?

1. Us�l-i-Kafi, vol. 3, p. 148
2. Musakkin-ul-Fu'ad, pp. 47, 48 and 50
3. Ghurar-ul-Hikam
4. Ghurar-ul-Hikam
5. Mishkat-ul-'Anwar, p. 50
6. Majm�'ah Warram, vol. 3, p. 288
7. Tafsir-i-Burhan

Section 7: Polytheism Prohibited

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 51

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لاَ تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ

51. "And Allah has said: 'Do not take two gods. Verily, He is only One God; hence, fear Me (***and Me alone***)***."***

The objective in declaring here that you must not designate for yourselves two gods is not the fact that you must and you are allowed to designate three gods. On the other hand, firstly, the total and the least negation imply the utmost negation in it as well.

Secondly, the objective of this verse, perhaps is the ideas of those pagans who used to say: We have got One God Who is the Creator, and one who is administrator, and we must direct our worshipping towards the later one. [1]

As for the query of the pagans who raised this issue in some previous verses that: if Allah so wanted, we would not become pagans, this verse states that Allah has dissuaded you from paganism, hence, how can He have intended you to become pagans? Therefore, Allah has ordained you not to designate two gods for yourselves.

The verse says:

"And Allah has said: 'Do not take two gods. Verily, He is only One God..."

The unity in the system of creation and the unity governing its laws and procedures are themselves clues as to the unity of Allah. Such being the case, He declares: Fear My punishment only and fear opposition to My commandments and nothing else.

The verse continues saying:

"...hence, fear Me** (**and Me alone**)**."

The fact that the Qur'anic word /'iyyaya/, which proceeds, is the proof for its confinements and limitations, which implies only and solely fear opposition to Me and My punishment. Another example of this form is:

"You** (**alone**) **do we worship and of you** (**only**) **do we seek help."2

The great commentator, the Late Tabarsi quotes a delicate sentence from some philosophers under this verse, saying:

"Allah has commanded you not to worship two gods, but you fabricated so many gods for yourself. Your unruly self is one idol, your whims and passions are regarded as other idols, and the world and your material objectives are your other idols. You even prostrate before other human beings; so how can you be a monotheist?!"

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 52

وَلَهُ مَا فِي السَّماوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ وَلَهُ الدِّينُ وَاصِباً أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَتَّقُونَ

52. "Unto Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and to Him should obedience be** (**rendered**) **constantly. Then are you in awe of other than Allah?"

The Qur'anic term /din/ mentioned in this verse denotes 'worshipping' and 'servitude' which are the requirements of the embracing of Faith and of the school of Truth.

The Arabic word /wasib/ signifies 'constantly' and 'intensively', as verse 9 of Surah As-Saffat, No. 37 says:

"...and for them is a perpetual chastisement."

In sharp contrast to those superstitious ideas by which they used to suppose god for every type of beings, Allah is only One for whatever is found in the Heavens and on the earth.

So, religious framework for laws and religious legislations are the sole rights of the One Who possesses the entire process of genesis and creation.

The verse says:

“Unto Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and to Him should obedience be (rendered) constantly…”

Towards the end of this verse, the Qur’an declares that despite the fact that all laws, religion, and obedience belongs to Allah, do you still fear other than Allah and abstain from other than Him?

The verse continues saying:

“…Then are you in awe of other than Allah?”

Can the idols do any harm against you or bestow on you any blessings the opposition of which scares you and you consider their worship as a requirement?

Surah An-Nahl – Verses 53 – 54

وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْأَرُونَ

ثُمَّ إِذَا كَشَفَ الضُّرَّ عَنكُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنكُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

53. “And whatever of favour is (bestowed) on you, it is from Allah; then whenever any calamity afflicts upon you, unto Him you cry (for assistance).
54. “Then when He remove the affliction from you, behold! A group of you associate others with their Lord.”

The Arabic term /durr/ refers to that kind of anxiety which results from the absence of blessings, and the Qur’anic term /taj’arūn/ signifies ‘crying’ and ‘appealing’.

The content of this verse has also been repeated in some other verses of the Qur’an as is the case in verse 67 of Surah ‘Isra’ which proclaims:

“And when affliction touches you in the sea, away will go those on whom you call except Him; but as He delivers you to the land, you turn away (from Him), and man is very ungrateful.”

However, once He embarks you safely, you will turn away from Him and you start betraying His favours and blessings.

The verse says:

"And whatever of favour is (bestowed) on you, it is from Allah; then whenever any calamity afflicts upon you, unto Him you cry (for assistance).

Certainly, hearing your call for help, Allah answers your call and solves your difficulties. Afterwards, as He removed your troubles and saved you from your losses, some of you designate associates and counterparts for Him and turn to the idols.

The verse says:

"Then when He remove the affliction from you, behold! A group of you associate others with their Lord."

In fact, the Holy Qur'an alludes to this minute point that monotheism, as an inherent trait, is embedded in everybody's nature, but in normal circumstances, it is obscured by one's negligence, arrogance ignorance, fanaticism and superstition.

Anyway, do not regard Allah's blessings as the consequences of your own struggle, education and your own administrative ability or as a result of your luck or chances. By contrast, regard whatever of blessings given to you, even the most insignificant ones in your eyes, as what Allah has given you.

The blissful Prophet (S) remarks:

"He who regards the blessings of Allah as only food and clothing, has failed both in performing his duties, and he has approached Allah's punishment." [3]

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 55

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ فَتَمَتَّعُوا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

55. "So that they may show ingratitude for whatever (of blessings and removing hardships) We have given them; then enjoy yourselves for soon will you know."

A glance at previous verses up to this moment depicts the manner of the Divine invitation and the Divine provision for education!

He is the sole and only Allah:

"…verily He is only One God…" [4]

"Unto Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth…"[5]

He possesses everything:

"Unto Him belongs whatever is."

It is He Who provides all with instruction:

"To Him should obedience be…". 6

He is benevolent, providing all with blessings:

"And whatever of favour is (bestowed) on you, it is from Allah…" 7

He answers all calls:

"…then whenever any calamity afflicts upon you, unto Him you cry for assistance." 8

Do you yet seek other people's assistance?

The end-result of paganism leads to blasphemy, and disregarding of His blessings brings the Divine chastisement.

Therefore, there, after naming the above logical reasoning and making the facts transparent, He implies with a threatening tone: Let them spare the blessings which We have given them, and let them enjoy worldly materials temporarily; they will soon find out the conclusive results of their performance.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 56

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِمَا لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيباً مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ تَاللَّهِ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَفْتَرُونَ

56. "And they assign a share out of that which We have provided them with, for what they do not know. By Allah, you will certainly be questioned for that which you used to forge."

Following the former well-justified discussions concerning the rejection of paganism and worshipping of the idols, the Qur'an points to the three parts of the innovations and evil habits of the pagans, implying that they appropriate a certain portion of what Allah has allocated to them for the idols which provide no advantages or losses for them.

The verse says:

"And they assign a share out of that which We have provided them with, for what they do not know…"

This share consisted of a number of camels and other four-footed animals and part of it comprised of

agricultural products which have been alluded to in the Surah Al-An'am, verse 136. they were regarded by the pagans as the proper share of the idols and which were dispensed within their path.

Then, later, the Qur'an, swearing to Allah, announces that in the Court of Justice of the Resurrection Day, they all will be interrogated about in connection with these lies, slanders, and accusations or perjuries.

The verse says:

"...By Allah, you will certainly be questioned for that which you used to forge."

Therefore, their vicious and evil acts contains both the losses which they incur in this world, for parts of their capitals are perished in this way, and the punishment which they will meet in the Hereafter.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 57

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

57. "And they ascribe daughters to Allah, glory be to Him; and for themselves (they ascribe sons) what they desire."

The second evil innovation of the pagans which they entertained in their imagination was the assigning of daughters to Allah. He is clear of everything and of having children, and Allah is pure of all material things.

However, they ascribe for themselves whatever they desire.

The verse says:

"And they ascribe daughters to Allah, glory be to Him; and for themselves (they ascribe sons) what they desire."

That is, they were never ready to ascribe those daughters whom they ascribed to God for themselves, too. In principle, having daughters was regarded as a kind of scandal, and a shame in their culture.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 58

وإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالأُنثَى ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدّاً وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

58. "And when one of them is given the news of having a daughter his face becomes black while he is wroth inwardly."

This verse refers to the third hideous evil habit of the pagans for the sake of complementing the above discussion. It implies that when one of them is informed of the good tidings of having been provided a daughter by Allah, he will be so infuriated with anger that his face changes altogether and becomes blackened while being full of wrath.

The noble verse says:

"And when one of them is given the news of having a daughter his face becomes black while he is wroth inwardly."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 59

يَتَوَارَي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِن سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ أَيُمْسِكُهُ عَلَي هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلاَ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

59. "He hides him from the people for the evil of the news which has been given to him, (***asking himself***)***: shall he keep her with disgrace or bury her*** (***alive***) ***in the dust? Beware!*** (***How***) ***evil is what they judge!"***

It is true that the birth of a child is considered as a good tiding, but superstitions regard such good tidings as disgrace and humiliation. This noble verse declares that all does not end to this and he, in order to save himself from such scandal which, to his incorrect belief, has overtaken him, he escapes from his people, going into hiding for this evil announcement made to him.

The verse says:

"He hides him from the people for the evil of the news which has been given to him…"

He goes on immersed in this thought constantly as to whether he should take upon himself the scandal of this disgrace by keeping the daughter or bury her alive under the earth.

The verse says:

"… (***asking himself***)***: shall he! keep her with disgrace or bury her*** (***alive***) ***in the dust?…"***

Condemning this tyrannical and inhumane verdict in an evermore-explicit manner, the Holy Qur'an declares as to what a bad and an evil judgment they pass on such matters.

The verse continues saying:

"…Beware! (***How***) ***evil is what they judge!"***

Certainly, they do pass a bad judgment on the matter, for they used to bury alive girls while they had the right to stay alive just in the same way as the boys had, and perhaps a girl might have been better than

a boy.

Ibn-i-Abb as has quoted as saying that if Allah wanted to consider the wishes of those people in the process of creation, no girls would be born, because no one desired to have a daughter; and if all children were born as sons, the human generation would be exterminated.

The Role of Islam in the Revival of the Position of Women

The humiliation and the damaging of the personality of women were not confined to the Ignorant Arabs of that time, women had an insignificant position among some other nations, too, any perhaps even among the most civilized nations of that time and, usually, a woman was regarded as a commodity and not as a human being.

However, the Arabs of the Age of Ignorance did their utmost in denouncing and in humiliating women in some more heinous and terrible forms.

Nevertheless, since the dawn of Islam, this superstition was fought out hard in all its dimensions. The Prophet of Islam himself (S) showed such a high esteem for his daughter, Fatimah Zahra (as), the Islamic Lady (as), that the people wondered.

He used to kiss her hands despite his high position, and he would visit her immediately upon the return from his trips, and the first person to visit was his daughter, Fatimah.

In a tradition from the Prophet (S) we read that he says:

"What a nice child a person's daughter is! She is affectionate and of great help; she is one's companion and she is clean while cleaning at the same time!"

In fact, such respect shown towards the personality of women has served as a cause for their liberation in the society and has put an end to the era of servitude and slavery of women.

However, it is most unfortunate that in some Islamic societies, there are still those forms of 'ignorant' thought prevalent, and there are still a good number of families who rejoice in having sons born to them and are disturbed by having daughters.

Even in the case of the Western Societies which imagine that they have high regards for the personality of women, we notice in practice that women are so greatly humiliated and are treated as puppets or as a means for extinguishing the fire of passion of men and / or as an instrument for the dissemination of information with regard to a certain merchandise.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 60

لِلَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالاَخِرَةِ مَثَلُ السَّوْءِ وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الاَعْلَي وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

60. "For those who do not believe in the hereafter, is an evil attribute, and Allah's is the sublime attributes, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

Those who do not believe in the Hereafter and consider Allah as having children possess an evil and nasty attribute, which consist of shamefulness and being sorrowful. But, there are outstanding qualities for Allah such as domination and might.

Some commentators suggest that this means that they are having defective traits, like: ignorance, blasphemy, being misled, contingency, weakness, powerlessness, needing sons and murdering of daughters; and there are certain qualifications of Lordship for Allah (s.w.t.) such as: having no need for companionship, spouse, children, and having the attributes of Lordship, authenticity and monotheistic nature.

Question: In this holy verse, He declares:

"…Allah's is the sublime attributes,"

Elsewhere He says:

"...do not coin any similitude for Allah".[9]

How are contradictions among them made possible?

Answer: The aim in declaring /'am al/ is using 'similes'. That is, do not exemplify Allah for something else; and the purpose of /maal-ul-'A'la/ is the qualification of /'A'la/ 'the highest' or the 'most elevated' and which signifies being essential in essence and not accidental; being Eternal, All-powerful, Omniscient, Alive, Unique etc.

Some commentators claim that the objective of /maal-ul-'A'la/ is examples which are used correctly; and the objective of the latter phrase is 'those examples which are incorrectly employed.'

The verse says:

"For those who do not believe in the hereafter, is an evil attribute, and Allah's is the sublime attributes…"

And, the last sentence of the verse means that Omnipotent Allah is He out of Whose domain, nothing exists, and He is the Wise One Who places everything in its proper place according to His Wisdom.

The verse says:

"...and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

One can infer from this verse that one must not attribute low traits to Allah, for He has criticized of the pagans who attributed to Him what they did not like for themselves. Once man abhors being attributed an evil thing, how is it that he seeks to attribute that hideous thing or the like of it to Allah?

1. Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan
2. Surah Al-Fatihah, No. 1, verse 5
3. Tafsir-i-N⍰r-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 3
4. The current Surah, verse 51
5. The current Surah, verse 52
6. Ibid
7. The current Surah, verse 53
8. Ibid
9. The current Surah, verse 74

Section 8: Qur'an, the Guidance and the Mercy

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 61

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِم مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَلَكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَي أَجَلٍ مُسَمّي فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لاَيَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلاَ يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ

61. "And if Allah were to take people to task for their inequity, He would not leave on it (***the earth***) ***a single moving being, but He respites them until an appointed time; so, when their term comes, they can not delay*** (***it***) ***an hour nor*** (***yet***) ***can they advance*** (***it***)***."***

The general rule of Allah is the postponement of the punishment, but it sometimes happens that He teaches the oppressors a lesson so as to provide instruction for others such as whatever happened to the nation of Lot, Noah, and Tham⍰d.

This respite provided by Allah is for the sake of repentance and compensation for one's sins and is based on His favour. Hence, do not become arrogant because of it.

Anyway, after discussing about the terrible crimes of the Arab pagans through previous verses in connection with the evil innovations they committed and the crime of burying alive of their own daughters, some may raise this question as to why is it that Allah does not immediately punish the culprit

subjects with all these oppressions, and abhor-able crimes?

This very verse in question seeks to provide an answer to this question implying: If Allah were to punish people for the oppressive offences which they commit, no moving object will survive throughout the earth.

The verse says:

"And if Allah were to take people to task for their inequity, He would not leave on it (the earth) a single moving being..."

The Arabic term /dabbah/ refers to whatever moving and living animal there is. It may, here, allude to 'human beings' metaphorically by procuring the symmetrical dimensions to it which in this case is /'al a zulmihim/ (for their inequity). That is, were Allah to question human beings with regard to their tyranny, there would remain no mankind throughout the earth.

This possibility also exists that by this, all moving objects is meant, for, we know that such beings are generally created for the sake of human beings, as the Qur'an says:

"It is He Who has created for you all that is in the earth."[1]

Once mankind is perished altogether, the rationale for the existence of other living objects on the earth will also be nonexistent, and their entire generation will be exterminated.

This question may be raised in here that if we look closely at the generalization and at the comprehensiveness of the significance of the verse, the result will be that no one exists on the earth except those who are oppressors and everybody has had his share of committing cruelties.

So if the punishment is to be administered rapidly, no one will be excluded. Nevertheless, we know that not only the prophets and the Imams who are immaculate and thus not subjected to such punishments, for this rule does not apply to them, but also there are certain devout people and people of true faith whose good deeds surely excel as compared to their petty sins, thus they do certainly not fall into this category of fitting for the extermination as a way of being punished.

The answer to this question lies in the fact that the verse provides a typical verdict which is not to be regarded as a universal or general verdict.

The proof for such an exception is provided in verse 32 of Surah Fatir, No. 35 which declares:

"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants; but of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's permission; this is the great excellence."

According to this verse, the people are divided into 3 groups: The oppressive group, the moderate group, who have committed light sins, and the group who are counted good people; that is, those who are categorized as pioneers of whatever is good and acceptable.

Certainly, out of these three groups only the first one is subject to the rule expressed in the verse under discussion and neither the second nor the third ones can be categorized and included. And, since the first group usually constitutes the majority of the people of the societies, making mention of such a generalization is not surprising at all.

Then the Qur'an makes mention of this point that Allah provides all oppressors with a respite for a certain amount of time until their nominal death (certain limited time), thus delaying their death time.

However, as their death approaches, no advancing nor delaying for the least time will occur. By contrast, their death will take place at that exact date which will neither come in advance nor in retardation.

The verse says:

"...but He respites them until an appointed time; so, when their term comes, they can not delay (it) an hour nor (yet) can they advance (it)."

As for the significance of the phrase: /'ajalin musamm a/ (an appointed time), the commentators have expressed various ideas.

However, with regard to other verses of the Qur'an, including verse 2 of the Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6 and verse 34 of Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7 it seems that the purpose is to be the arrival of death itself.

That is, Allah respites people until the end of their lifetime in order to complete the argument, so that haply the oppressors try to reform themselves, reconstructing their life experiences, and thus returning to Allah, the truth and justice.

When this respite expires, the order as to their death will be issued, and just from that very moment their punishments and retributions start.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 62

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنَي لاَ جَرَمَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ النَّارَ وَأَنَّهُم مُفْرَطُونَ

62. "And they assign unto Allah what they (themselves) dislike and their tongues assert the falsehood that the better (portion) will be theirs. Inevitably the Fire is theirs and they will be the foremost (to it)."

The Qur'an condemns once again the ugly innovations and superstitions which the Ignorant Arabs

entertained concerning the hatred towards their daughters with a novel expression. It also condemns their belief saying that the angels are daughters of Allah.

The verse says:

"And they assign unto Allah what they** (**themselves**) **dislike..."

This is an astonishing contradiction. If the angels are daughters of Allah, then it becomes obvious that girls are 'good things', why then are you unhappy for having daughters born to your own families? In case it is a bad thing to have daughters, then why do you consider it for Allah?

Nevertheless, they falsely claim that the ultimate good result and good reward belongs to them. How can they expect such a reward and with what good performance? Do they expect it by burying alive their innocent daughters who are defenseless, or by perjury with regard to the holy presence of Allah? By which deeds do they expect it?

The verse says:

"...and their tongues assert the falsehood that the better** (**portion**) **will be theirs. Inevitably the Fire is theirs and they will be the foremost** (**to it**)**."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 63

تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَي أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

63. "By Allah, We verily sent** (**messengers**) **unto the nations before you, but the Satan made their** (**abominable**) **acts fair-seeming to them. Then he** (**the Satan**) **is their guardian today, and they will have a painful punishment."

The objective of this holy verse is to console the Prophet of Islam (S) as not to be worried for the sake of the people's remaining heedless and being negligent, since all prophets used to confront such individuals.

In view of the fact that those people who may raise this question after listening to the stories of the pre-Islamic Arabs how one can be so cruel as to bury alive his own daughter and how can such a thing be practical, the Qur'an apparently seems to be providing an answer to the question, saying:

"By Allah, We verily sent** (**messengers**) **unto the nations before you, but the Satan made their** (**abominable**) **acts fair-seeming to them..."

Certainly, the Satan is so advert in his own whimsical acts that he makes the worst and the most abominable acts as nice that even one imagines such acts as a source of pride for himself, just in the

same way that the 'pre-Islamic Arab' was proud of burying alive his own daughter(s) and praised that as protecting his chastity and saving the prestige of his own tribe. He would proudly say:

"I buried my daughter with my own hands so as not to let the enemy capture her in a battle later."

While the most shameful behavior is made possible under the guise of the most favored masks owing to the Satan's temptations, the rest of the matter is clearly evident. We nowadays witness such seemingly good-looking acts in many cases of theft, robberies, and crimes which are provided with proper justifications and under enticing pretexts.

Then the Qur'an adds that the present-day pagans follow the same deviant programs of the previous nations to whom the Satan presented their acts as nice, and the present-day Satan is their guardian, and they are being inspired by him.

The verse says:

"...Then he** (**the Satan**) **is their guardian today..."

It is for this very reason that the painful Divine punishment is awaiting them.

"...and they will have a painful punishment."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 64

وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلاَّ لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًي وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

64. "And We have not sent down unto you the Book** (**the Qur'an**)**, except that you may make clear to them that about which they differ; and** (**as**) **a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe."

This verse explains the objective of the prophetic mission of the messengers of Allah, so as to clarify that if nations and tribes put aside their passions and whims and personal tastes, and take recourse to the prophets, there will not be any of such superstitions, disagreements, and contradictory acts left.

He says to the Prophet (S) that We have not revealed to you the Qur'an except that you make transparent to them the issues about which they disagree. And this Book is a source of guidance and mercy for those who embrace the Faith.

The verse says:

"And We have not sent down unto you the Book** (**the Qur'an**)**, except that you may make clear to them that about which they differ; and** (**as**) **a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe."

And it also polishes all Satanical temptations from their heart as well as the enticing layers of one's

despotic soul.

It also derives away the mischievous curtains from mixing up the facts and, at the same time, reveals and exposes the superstitions and crimes which are covered under the enticing guise. It removes all disagreements which have their roots in the passions and low desires and puts an end to all cruelties and oppressions. It sheds the light of guidance and mercy all over.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 65

وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الأرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

65. "And Allah has sent down water from the sky, and therewith given life to the earth after its death. Verily, in that is a sign for a people who listen (to the words of truth whole-heartedly)."

The previous verse dealt with the revelation of the 'Book', which serves as a source of enlivening of the hearts. In the current verse, the process of descending of rain is being discussed which provides life for the earth.

Therefore, He returns once again to the issue of the explanation of the various blessings and the favors which serve both as an emphasis concerning the issue of monotheism and cognition of Allah, and alludes to the issue of resurrection in that passing. Moreover, by stressing these graces, He incites the sense of gratitude of the servants, thus enabling them to approach Allah more and more.

At first, it says:

"And Allah has sent down water from the sky, and therewith given life to the earth after its death..."

There are clear signs for those who lend their ears as to the magnanimity of Allah while furnishing clues for all regarding His power and splendor.

There are also justifications provided for the coming of the resurrection day while exhibiting one of the numerous blessings of Allah. Nevertheless, the sinful man has been so deafened and become out of touch with realities that he can neither hear nor understand.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily, in that is a sign for a people who listen (to the words of truth whole-heartedly)."

But as for those who do not hearken by their hearts, they are the ones who relate these issues to nature, and we have proclaimed repeatedly that such people are overtaken by blasphemy, paganism, dissidence, and sinfulness, and their rational souls are not moralized and they are the examples of the

people who: “do not understand,” “do not see”, “do not listen”, and “do not know”.

As for those who have managed to elevate their souls by the light of faith and moral values, the examples of the following hold true in their cases: to be said: “they understand”, “they listen”, “they see”, and “they know”.

The first category is addressed as:

“They are a cattle, rather they are more astray…”[2]

For they had the power to discriminate the vices from the virtues though they did not implement their sense of discrimination. They are those who took no notice of Allah, the Resurrection Day, and the ultimate aim of their existence, forsaking them for the worldly, matters.

The second category comprises of the examples of: Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 19 which signifies that only the sage and men of wisdom are considerate with regard to this.

1. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 29
2. Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 179

Section 9: Guidance from the Bounties of Allah for Man

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 66

وإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُسْقِيكُم مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِن بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَّبَناً خَالِصاً سَآئِغاً لِلشَّارِبِينَ

66. “And verily there is a lesson laid out for you in the cattle; We give you to drink of what is in their bellies from between the digested food and the blood, pure milk, palatable for the drinkers.”

The Almighty does not only let down water from the clouds which is the source of life, but He also extracts milk which is the source of life out of the insides of the animals as well. The Arabic term /far/ means digested food within the stomach, and the term /‘ibrat/ refers to that which enables one to pass through the stage of ignorance towards cognition.

Although the Arabic term /’An‘am/ is plural, yet the pronoun in the word /but□nihi/ is singular. For, the purpose is every single one of the four-footed animals and not all of them.

Milk is a complete food serving which functions both as water and food while having all nutritional values, thus meeting all bodily needs.

In quotations, we read that milk enhances one's wisdom, purifies one's mind, enlightens one's eyes, reinforces one's heart, strengthens one's back and diminishes one's oblivion.

The four-footed animals are not only the sources of provision for our needs, but also they can serve us as a means for our spiritual development and the growth in our faith.

Can the Lord not bring out and reassemble man out of the earth in the resurrection day, He Who extracts milk out of grass? The Almighty, Who provides us with pure milk from between the digested food and blood of animals, will He not be able to differentiate good deeds from evil ones?

The conversion of grass into milk requires a purification system, disinfecting process, the elimination of detrimental substances, some sweetening processing unites, heating systems, lubricating materials, coloration techniques, and installing of piping systems within the bodies of animals.

How then is it feasible that an oil engineer is required for the refining of oil while refining of milk does not require a creator?

The verse says:

"And verily there is a lesson laid out for you in the cattle..."

Refined and purified human beings are the ones who go through different ups and downs of the stages of life, political issues and ideologies as well as various friends and yet are not affected by them or by their motives.

The verse continues saying:

"...We give you to drink of what is in their bellies from between the digested food and the blood..."

The prime condition for a drink to be agreeable to the taste, is its purification. It is certainly the case with drinkable waters.

The verse says:

"...pure milk, palatable for the drinkers."

Being agreeable to the taste must be confirmed by all consumers, and not only human beings. Therefore, we note that the verse has not mentioned 'palatable for you', but it has remarked:

"palatable for the drinkers."

In our civilized contemporary world, it is said and heard that some civilized countries dispatch all those materials, the expiry date of which has been passed, to be consumed by displaced people i.e. the refugees etc.

Consumption of milk by man reveals the fact that He Who has created the animal and has provided milk within its bodily built-up, is the One Who has created us and Who has been aware of our needs.

Hadrat-i-Ali (as), addressing the collector of the religious dues, ‘Zakat’, in the 25th letter of Nahj-ul-Balaqah, declares:

When you are being sent for the collection of ‘Zakat’, you must observe certain principles, among which is leaving part of the milk of the animal in its breast so as its offspring might not be left without a proper amount of nourishment.

Do not separate the animal from its offspring; let the tired animals relax for a while along side the way, and finally, do not stop them from grazing and drinking water on the whole.

Beating animals, milking cattle with long nails, exploitation and requiring over-working by animals, and every other kind of oppression towards animals is forbidden.

We understand from the Qur’an that Hadrat-i-Sulayman was compassionate towards animals in spite of all his glory and despite the fact that he had dominated all mankind and the ‘Jinns’ (fairies), he used to touch their neck and feet with his blessed hands.

It says:

“...so he began to slash their legs and necks.”[1]

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 67

وَمِن ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالاَعْنَابِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَراً وَرِزْقاً حَسَناً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لاَيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

67. “And of the fruits of the palm and the vines, you get out therefrom (drinks of) intoxication and (also) goodly sustenance. Verily there is a sign in that for a people who understand.”

The Arabic term /sukr/ signifies ‘losing one’s mind’ and the word /sakar/ refers to its origin.

In the past two verses, the issues in question were water and milk both of which are natural and direct drinks. This verse deals with those drinks which are obtained by extraction.

Once Allah Himself is in action, there is always grace and blessings involved, namely, rainwater and pure milk. But, once man is involved, one finds that at times, provisions are good and at times the issue

involved is intoxicating drinks which are the source of devastation and corruption.

Therefore, following the discussion of the animals and their milk, this noble verse refers to a part of the merits of plants, implying that Allah provided you with a kind of blessed nutrition for you out of the fruits of palm-trees and vines which you sometimes turn into detrimental forms and use it in the form of intoxicating substances and liquids, and sometimes use it in their tidy and clean forms. There is an evident clue in it for those who ponder.

The verse says:

"And of the fruits of the palm and the vines, you get out therefrom** (**drinks of**) **intoxication and** (**also**) **goodly sustenance. Verily there is a sign in that for a people who understand."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 68

وَأَوْحَي رَبُّكَ إِلَي النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتاً وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ

68. "And your Lord revealed to the Bee** (**an instinctive revelation**) **to build cells in the mountains and in the trees and in what they** (**men**) **build."

The Arabic term /wahy/ signifies allusion and rapid and secret transfer that besides the Divine revelation to the prophets, includes both instincts, like this verse, and the divine inspiration, like Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 7 which says:

"And We revealed to Moses' mother..."

It also includes satanical temptations, as in the verse which says:

"...and verily the Satans inspire unto their friends..."2

The Qur'anic tune alters amazingly in this verse. While continuing previous discussions regarding the various Divine blessings and the statement of the secrets of creation, the Qur'an switches the discussion to 'bees' and later to the issue of 'honey' in the final analysis. However, it is named as /wahy/ (revelation) which implies a form of Divine mission and a form of 'mysterious revelation'.

At first, it says:

"And your Lord revealed to the Bee** (**an instinctive revelation**) **to build cells in the mountains and in the trees and in what they** (**men**) **build."

The Qur'anic term /wahy/ here denotes that same instinctive command and motives and that unconscious revelation which Allah has created in different animals and living objects.

The first mission of the bees, in this verse, is concerned with building hives. The reason for this is probably the fact that having a proper residence is the first condition for living, following which other activities are being made possible.

Incidentally, according to Tafsir-i-'Atyab-ul-Bayan, there are explicit allusions in the Qur'an as to the fact that all beings, including the inanimate objects, plants and animals have got a certain understanding of His Divinity, the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S) and the mastership 'Wilayat' of the immaculate and infallible Imams such as:

"The seven heavens and the earth and every being therein celebrate His glory..."[3]

and like the verse which says:

"...O mountains sing praises with him, and the birds..."[4]

and so on and so forth. We have it in certain Islamic narrations that 'Wilayat' of the Imams has been offered to the mountains, waters, trees, and animals.

There is sequential news as to the fact that numerous animals have petitioned their grievances with them. Therefore, it is not astounding that the 'bees' receive revelations and be commissioned for completing certain missions.

Moreover, it is astonishing that the houses of the bees, that is: 'beehives', are built in hexagonal form on top of each other without having any angels, which case has astonished all architectural engineers despite being set upon lofty mountainous regions and high-altitude trees, high places and roofs.

Certainly, this struggle by bees and the movement of animals for the selection of the houses, especially of bees, is based on their instinct embedded in their nature by Allah.

Incidentally, the best kind of honey is the one that is made by bees in the mountains that they feed on flowers therein and not those which are fed by artificial sugary substances.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 69

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِن بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

69. "Then eat out of all the fruits, and pave the ways of your Lord sincerely. There comes forth out of their bellies a drink of varying colours, wherein is healing for men. Verily in that is a sign for a people who reflect."

There are two allusions made by Allah in this verse and in the previous verses to the two sources of vital

drinks which are provided by animals: one is milk and the other one is honey. We have seen in the last two holy verses that man makes intoxicating substances or liquids out of fruits, while bees make honey from plants which is healing substance.

In the targeted significant and philosophical Divine system, negligence and idleness is a shunned extremely.

Therefore, wherever in the Qur'an, there is reference made to eating, there is also stated a responsibility alongside that, among which are the following:

"...eat of the good things and do righteousness."[5]

"...eat of them and feed the distressed one, the needy."[6]

"...eat of the good things We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah..."[7]

"...eat of its fruit ... and do not act extravagantly..."[8]

In this verse, Allah commands the bees to eat, but that kind of eating which is coupled with a goal and a responsibility. Men of Allah are like bees. They shun low lands and select lofty high lands. They follow the Divine path in a humble manner by the help of Divine knowledge. Such people utter what is based on wisdom and spiritual flavors.

The verse says:

"Then eat out of all the fruits, and pave the ways of your Lord sincerely. There comes forth out of their bellies a drink of varying colours, wherein is healing for men. Verily in that is a sign for a people who reflect."

Explanations

Animal behavior is all predetermined according to the Divine command, which is instinctively performed by them.

Honey consists of the juice of all fruits.

"Then eat out of all fruits..."

Not only the selection of residence and the food of animals are guided by the Divine Will, but also all their acts are something pre-determined by Him.

"...and pave the ways of your Lord..."

The movement of animals and their direction is done alongside the path which Allah has set for them and it is a humble one.

The miracle of creation: There is a honey-producing factory within the belly of such a small animal, the bee.

"...there comes forth out of their bellies, a drink of varying colours..."

Natural honey is in different colours. (The colours white, yellow, red. Perhaps such differences in colours are based on the differences of colours in flowers.)

There are various healing effects in honey by which many diseases may be cured.

"...wherein is healing for men..."

It goes without saying that honey is not a cure for all diseases. However, it has been mentioned in the form of indeterminate noun, /šifa'un/.

House-building, mummification, and honey-producing alongside toxic-producing functions are being all done by such a small animal, like the bee. This reveals the sign of Allah's Might and Power.

All instructive lessons are only aimed and targeted for those who meditate,

"...Verily in that is a sign for a people who reflect."

Otherwise, there are the bulk of individuals who utilize honey throughout their lifetime but are not predisposed to allocate even several minutes to thinking about it.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 70

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ وَمِنكُم مَن يُرَدُّ إِلَي أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَي لاَ يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئاً إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ

70. "And Allah has created you, then He will cause you to die, and some of you will be kept back unto lowest state of the age, so that after knowing somewhat, they may know nothing. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful."

The Arabic term /'ar[illegible]al/ is derived from the word /ra[illegible]l/ which means, 'mean' and without any value. The meanest part of one's life is often that period during which weakness and forgetfulness will reach its peak.

The oblivion of the period of senility belongs to the ordinary people, otherwise, men of Allah, such as Hadrat-i-Noah (as) and Hadrat-i-Mahdi (as), who live long for carrying out their missions, will never be entangled with problems of weakness or negligence.

Therefore, by all means, the verse follows the line for proving the existence of the sole Allah, which is done by introducing changes in blessings, matters which are beyond the limits of man's power, and

which exhibit the fact that they are determined from another origin.

At first, it says:

"And Allah has created you, then He will cause you to die..."

Both issues are determined by Him: Life and death, so that you may know that it is not you who determine your own life and death. Nor is your life span decided by you. Some die while they are still young, while others die when reaching old age. However, some of you reach the worst and the utmost years of your life which is the extreme senility period.

The end-result of such a long-lasting life is that, after acquiring the full command of all learning, they would know nothing and all their knowledge would be last in oblivion.

The verse says:

"...and some of you will be kept back unto lowest state of the age, so that after knowing somewhat, they may know nothing..."

It is just like the beginning of the life and the onset of childhood during which they knew nothing and they were unaware and oblivious. Certainly, Allah is aware and has all potentialities.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful."

All power is His and He will bestow that power whenever He feels appropriate and He will take back whenever He feels fit.

1. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 33
2. Surah Al-'An' am, No. 6, verse 12
3. Surah 'Isra', No. 17, verse 44
4. Surah Saba, No. 34, verse 10
5. Surah Al-Mu'mineen, No. 23, verse 51
6. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 28
7. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 172
8. Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 141

Section 10: The Faithful and the Unfaithful Ones

Compared

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 71

وَاللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَي بَعْضٍ فِي الرِّزْقِ فَمَا الَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا بِرَادِّي رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَي مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ أَفَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ

71. "And Allah has made some of you excel others in the (***means of***) ***sustenance. So those who have been made to excel do not give their*** (***means of***) ***sustenance to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal therein. Do they then deny Allah's bounty?"***

And Allah has made some of you excel in means of sustenance over others. This blessing is allocated to man by Allah and through one's own effort, either because of his purity of soul, or for testing of others by him being made an example such as the cases of knowledge, health, and security.

However, those who have been made to excel, (owing to their own narrow-sightedness and narrow vision) are not predisposed to part with a portion of their share for the sake of their subjects so as to enable them to be on equal footing with them.

The verse says:

"And Allah has made some of you excel others in the (***means of***) ***sustenance. So those who have been made to excel do not give their*** (***means of***) ***sustenance to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal therein…"***

One may conclude that Muslims must not feel privileged or at an advantage when facing those who are in an inferior position with respect to them in their families.

Such differences in the amount of incomes have their origin in the abilities and talents of individuals which in turn are also from Allah's gifts. In certain cases, they may be acquired in some aspects, though in other cases they are definitely not acquired.

Therefore, even in a healthy sound environment from the economics point of view, one finds widespread gaps in incomes, which is undeniable. At any rate and despite all this, what lays the main foundations of one's successes is one's own struggle.

People's differences in their means of sustenance is one of the Divine wise programs, for if all people were to enjoy equal benefits, their spiritual peaks of perfection would not be demonstrated. For instance, generosity, perseverance, self-sacrifice, protection, compassion, modesty and the like usually exhibit

their significance whenever there are some differences among men.

Certainly, justice does not prevail only when Allah sets up all on an equal footing from the point of view of their abilities and conditions, for if all were to enjoy an equal amount of blessings, the issues of employment and cooperation, which are required for social life, would lose sense.

Nevertheless, individual differences in talents, abilities and incomes should not result in misuse of the potentialities with regard to the social strata.

It is for this reason that He proclaims at the end of the verse that:

"...Do they then deny Allah's bounty?"

Here, He makes an allusion to the fact that such differences in their original natural forms (and not in their artificial and oppressive sense) are also among Allah's blessings which have been brought forth to protect the human society and for the development of their different potentialities.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 72

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّـنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجاً وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّـنْ أَزْوَاجِكُم بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ اللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ

72. "And Allah has designated wives for you from among your own selves and has designated children and grandchildren for you from your wives and sustained you of clean means. Do they (still) believe in the falsehood and they disbelieve in the bounty of Allah?"

We read in Tafsir-i-Tabari that the Arabic term /hafadah/ refers to the son-in-law, child, grandchild and even the companions and servants, as well as the children who are born to the wife from a different husband. In Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan, it is cited that /hafadah/ is the plural form of /h afid/ and means 'rapidity in action' and as those near-of-kin are quicker in assisting the parents, they are called /hafadah/.

Anyway, this verse, which like the above two verses, begins with the term 'Allah' and discusses Allah's blessings, makes allusions to the graces from the humanitarian point of view, the aids, as well as to the social workers and clean means of sustenance. This verse complements the three-fold circle of blessings which are mentioned in these three verses.

That is, it begins with the life and death system, then it explains the 'variety in life style' by referring to the differences in means of sustenance and their abilities. The verse in question, which superintends the reproductive system of mankind, ends with clean means of sustenance.

It says:

“And Allah has designated wives for you from among your own selves…”

He has designated for you such wives who are the sources of both comfort for your soul and body, and the survival of generations.

Therefore, He hastens to add:

“…and has designated children and grandchildren for you from your wives…”

Then the Qur’an says:

“…and sustained you of clean means…”

And at the end of the discussion, the Qur’an declares this as a general conclusion: Do they still call on the idols despite all the splendor and power which they observe and despite all these graces which have been made available to them by Allah? Do they embrace the wrong and believe in it, and neglect the blessings of Allah?

The verse says:

“…Do they (***still***) ***believe in the falsehood and they disbelieve in the bounty of Allah?”***

What a judgment is it? And what a wrong and an untrue schedule this consists of that man has forgotten about the source of all blessings and has taken to those beings which lack even the least of all effects and which serve as an example of all the ‘untruth’ in all its dimensions.

Explanations

One’s spouse and children are all among the Divine blessings. One’s spouse is the source of comfort and one’s children are the sources of hope.

Matching between husband and wife is one of the favors of Allah and of the Divine wisdom, and marriage is a deliberate Divine program for man.

“And Allah has designated wives for you from your own selves…”

Allah makes provisions for both one’s spiritual needs and one’s material needs.

Separation of oneself from matrimonial links, preventing oneself from having children and abstaining oneself from what is allowed by Allah are all the examples of adhering to wrong principles and are signs of ingratitude for Allah’s blessings.

To fornicate or to commit adultery despite having wives and having allowed means of sustenance, present cases of disregarding Allah’s favours.

Tafsir-i-Safi and Jawami‘-ul-Jami‘ indicate that the objective of ‘Allah’s favours’, mentioned in the verse, is the blissful Prophet (S), the Qur’an, and Islam which the unbelievers used to reject.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 73

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لاَ يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ رِزْقاً مِنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ شَيْئاً وَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ

73. “And they worship other than Allah that has no power to provide them, of sustenance, anything from the heavens and the earth and can do nothing.”

Following the previous discussions on monotheism, this verse deals with the issue of paganism and, taking a stern and blaming tone, declares that they worship idols other than Allah which do not have at their disposal any means of sustenance in the skies and on the earth.

They are not only the proprietors of anything in this regard, but they also have no capabilities to create and have access to the means of sustenance.

The verses says:

“And they worship other than Allah that has no power to provide them, of sustenance, anything from the heavens and the earth and can do nothing.”

This style of meaning makes allusion to the matter that the pagans believed in and worshipped idols for they considered them as an impact in their destiny, their profits and their losses, while the worshipped one must be both provider of means of sustenance and mighty.

However, the partners whom they designate for Allah are neither able to make provisions now nor in the future.

Their imaginary objects of worship are neither able to pour rains from the sky nor are they able to grow plants on the earth.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 74

فَلاَ تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الاَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

74. “Therefore do not coin any similitudes for Allah. Verily, Allah knows and you do not know.”

The pagans regarded Allah as a king and considered idols as His ministers. This holy verse declares that an end must be put to such similes, and you should not designate equals for Him when worshipping

Allah for He has not got any equals or counterparts who may deserve being worshipped.

The verse says:

“Therefore do not coin any similitudes for Allah. Verily, Allah knows and you do not know.”

Some commentators have claimed that the first sentence of the verse which says:

“Therefore do not coin any similitudes for Allah...”

refers to the logic of the pagans during the ‘Age of Ignorance’, (the exact replica of which can also be found among some of contemporary pagans).

They used to claim that the reason why they would call on the idols was that they were not worthy for worshipping Allah, so they had to take idols because these were the near-stationed ones to the Lord. Allah is like a great king who grants audience only to ministers and his exclusive entourage.

However, the masses of the people who cannot have access to Him, will call on those who are exclusively received by Him.

Such groundless and unjustified kinds of logic which are sometimes depicted in the form of a deviating parable, are the most dangerous of all kinds of logic.

To answer such a claim, the Qur’an asserts that you should not use allegories in case of Allah; that is, allegories which suit limited scopes of thought and fit in the category of those whose existence is probable and which is full of defects and flaws.

If you were aware of the All-Encompassing attribute of Allah with regard to all beings and you knew about His grace and favour which is unlimited, and His proximity towards yourself, in which case makes Him approach you closer than your own ‘self’, you would never turn to other means for securing Allah’s attention.

That Lord Who has invited you to be in direct touch with Him in prayers, and has left the doors of His house wide-open to you day and night, He must not be likened to an oppressive king who has slipped into his palace and does not let anyone in there, except a few.

In our discussion of concerning Allah’s attributes, we have particularly pointed out the fact that one of the sliding slopes which exists in the way of understanding the attributes of Allah is that of the land-slide of using similes.

That is, comparing Allah’s attributes with those of man and considering them as similarities, because Allah is an infinite and boundless being in every respect and other beings are the ones which are finite and within limits and any comparison made in here causes one to remain aloof from knowing Him.

Even in cases where we are bound to do so, and to compare His Holy Essence to light and the like, we must note that such similes and metaphorical applications have got shortcomings and fail to achieve our purpose, and they might be only acceptable in part and not as a whole.

While most people are heedless of this fact, they are often thrown down the bottom of the slopes of the valley seemingly of simile and syllogism, when making their comparisons. They are then distanced from the truth of monotheism.

Thus, the Qur'an warns us repeatedly and attracts our attention to this fact; sometimes with the sentence:

"And there is none like unto Him."[1]

and sometimes it also uses the sentence:

"Nothing is similar to Him."[2]

At other times, the Qur'an calls our attention by using the first sentence of the abovementioned verse.

And, perhaps, the last sentence of the verse, by saying:

"Verily, Allah knows and you do not know"

explains this same subject that usually people are unaware of the secrets of the attributes of Allah.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 75

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً عَبْداً مَّمْلُوكاً لاَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَي شَيْءٍ وَمَن رَّزَقْنَاهُ مِنَّا رِزْقاً حَسَناً فَهُوَ يُنفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرّاً وَجَهْراً هَلْ يَسْتَوُونَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

75. "Allah sets forth a parable of a bonded slave, having no power over anything, and one whom We have provided with good means of sustenance from Us, then he spends from it secretly and openly. Are they equal? Praise belongs to Allah! But most of them do not know."

Allah has discussed the fact as to how the pagans are being misled, saying:

"Allah sets forth a parable of a bonded slave, having no power over anything..."

Allah here sets forth a parable to clarify His intention by it and thereby approaches the concept to the audience. The parable is: 'the slave who is a bonded one and has authority over nothing;' that is, he has got no options.

And a free man whom Allah has provided with means of sustenance, possesses property and blessings,

gives away out of his belongings openly and in secret and without any fear.

The verse says:

"...and one whom We have provided with good means of sustenance from Us, then he spends from it secretly and openly..."

As for the sentence: /hal yastawūn/ signifies:

"***Are they equal?***",

some commentators claim that this allegory relates to the believers and the disbelievers, since a disbeliever has not got involved in anything 'good ', while a believer acquires the 'good'.

Thus Allah has explained the difference between the believer and the disbeliever, hence, He has persuaded people to choose the path of the believers and dissuade them from taking the path of the disbelievers.

The holy phrase:

"***Praise belongs to Allah!***"

signifies that one must thank Allah for His blessings. This meaning refers to all of Allah's blessings. That is, say that the act of worship only deserves Him Who leads us towards monotheism, theology (the sciences of Divinities), and gratitude, and shows us the road to Paradise.

However, most people, that is the pagans, do not know that it is He Who deserves being worshipped, and all blessings belong to Him.

The verse says:

"...Are they equal? Praise belongs to Allah! But most of them do not know."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 76

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً رَجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَبْكَمُ لاَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَي شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ كَلٌّ عَلَي مَوْلاَهُ أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّـهْهُ لاَ يَأْتِ بِخَيرٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي هُوَ وَمَن يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَهُوَ عَلَي صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

76. "And Allah sets forth a parable of two men, one of whom is dumb having authority over nothing, and he is a burden upon his master, wherever he sends him he brings no good. Is he then equal to him who enjoins justice and he (himself) is on the straight path?"

You who do not consider the master and the slave as equals, how can you equalize the creator with the

creature?

Thus, we find Him using another parable for the slaves of the idols and the true believers, likening them to a deaf-mute born person who is at the same time a disabled slave, and a free man who is always engaged in calling the people to be just and fair and who is on the right path.

The Qur'an says:

"And Allah sets forth a parable of two men, one of whom is dumb having authority over nothing, and he is a burden upon his master..."

That is why he usually does not perform well whatever he is sent to. In this manner, this man has got four negative attributes: being a dumb by birth, absolute disability, being a burden to his lord, and, finally, procuring no useful outcome for whatever is referred to him.

Is such a man equal to the one who is eloquent in his speech, always calling people to be just, and following the right path? Of course, it is not so.

The verse says:

"...wherever he sends him he brings no good. Is he then equal to him who enjoins justice and he (himself) is on the straight path?"

Allah has set two allegories in this holy verse and in the previous verse inciting the people to condescend to the fact that all know that neither of these two groups are equal.

That is, as the two sides of either of these two parables can not be considered as equal, Allah can not be considered equal to the inanimate idols (which are incapable of doing any harm or benefit) despite all His favours and graces as well as all the religious blessings of this world and of the next which He has accorded to mankind.

Some have claimed that this allegory has been used by Allah to differentiate the believer from the unbeliever. The goal in using a dumb man is the pagan while the aim in mind in the case of mentioning he who resorts to preaching justice, is a believer who are not equal.

1. Surah Tauhid, No. 112, verse 4
2. Surah Shura, No. 42, verse 11

Section 11: The Hour of Judgment Shall Arrive Suddenly

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 77

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ وَمَآ أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلاَّ كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

77. "And to Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth; and the matter of the Hour** (**of Doom**) **is but as a twinkling of the eye, or it is nearer still. Verily Allah is All-powerful over everything."

The Qur'anic term /qayb/ (unseen) when facing intuition, is a relative matter. That is, something may be invisible to someone while the same thing may be present and visible to someone else.

The Arabic phrase /'amr-us-s a'ah/ (the matter of the Hour) signifies the advent of the resurrection day which is an important example of /qayb/, the 'invisible world', and which is one of the blessings of Allah when the timing of which has been kept secret from us.

As we have frequently seen, the Qur'an usually mixes the issues concerning monotheism with those relating to paganism, resurrection day, and the great court in Hereafter, here, after our discussion in passing about monotheism and polytheism, it touches upon the issue of resurrection and answering a part of the pagans' objections, who said: the dust particles of us scatter all over the places, who will be aware of their location to reassemble them, so that to be able to evaluate their record, it implies at first:

It is exclusive to Allah the unseen and the invisible world of the skies and the earth. And he knows them all.

The verse says:

"And to Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth..."

Then, it adds:

"...and the matter of the Hour** (**of Doom**) **is but as a twinkling of the eye or it is nearer still..."

These two sentences are self-explanatory and live allusions to the infinite Divine Power (s.w.t.), especially in such areas as of resurrection and the rising from the dead of men. Thus, at the end it says:

"...Verily Allah is All-powerful over everything."

That is, Allah can create resurrection day or everything else, as He is Omnipotent.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 78

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئاً وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالاَبْصَارَ وَالاَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

78. "And Allah has brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers** (**while**) **you knew nothing, and He appointed for you hearing and sight and hearts; that perhaps you may give thanks."

The Holy Qur'an, once again, refers to another lesson in monotheism and theology as well as the different bounties of Allah.

In this section of the issue of blessings, it devotes its first part to the blessings of science and learning as well as the means leading to knowledge.

The Qur'an declares:

"And Allah has brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers** (**while**) **you knew nothing..."

Certainly, in such a confined environment which lacked openness, such an ignorance was tolerable.

However, in this vast universe, that sort of ignorance was impossible to be continued, therefore, from among the devices for the cognition of the world, that is, eyes, ears, and reason were placed at your disposal, so that you understand the facts of life and these great blessings and your sense of gratitude be motivated as in face of such benevolent Creator in order, perhaps, to give Him His due gratitude.

The verse says:

"...and He appointed for you hearing and sight and hearts; that perhaps you may give thanks."

One way of expressing one's thanks for something, is its correct application, for the Qur'an criticizes those who have got eyes, yet they do not see, and they have got ears, yet they do not hear and they are not ready to hearken the truth.

The true way of expressing one's gratitude for having eyes and ears, is the acquisition of knowledge, for the verse, at first, says that you did not know; it was Allah Who gave you eyes and ears to thank; that is, to devote your life to learning.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 79

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَي الطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ فِي جَوِّ السَّمَآءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

79. “Do they not look at the birds, constrained in the middle of the sky? Naught holds them but Allah; verily there are signs in that for a people who believe.”

As was said before, the content of this Surah provides us with acquaintance about the blessings and focuses attention on their creator.

Up until now, we have noted Him mentioning such blessings as rainwater, milk, fruits, honey, the blessings of having wife and children. In this verse, and the next one, the blessings of birds, skin, wool of the four-footed animals, and the ways of utilization of mountains are being discussed.

The flight of birds, alone or in flocks, sometimes regulated and sometimes without any proper order, at times for escaping and at other times all take place for food.

Every bird flies with the right kind of wings commensurate with its weight and needs, all of which must focus the attention of the wise on Allah. Thus, Allah wants us to meditate on those creatures, and then He criticizes the ones who do not so. Birds are all, in all cases and everywhere, dominated by Him.

The verse says:

“Do they not look at the birds, constrained in the middle of the sky?...”

In modern warfare, some planes fly outside the range of anti-aircraft guns. However, birds are all within Allah’s area of power wherever they go.

I was once in an airplane when the airhostess declared, we would soon land in a few minutes at airport. I asked her why she did not mention the words, ‘Allah-willing’. She said:

“*There is no need for saying ‘Allah-willing’ as the plane computer has set all such as: timing, distance and everything.*”

I told her all those planes which crash in the air in the east and west of the world do have such equipments. Allah’s will does not wait for your computers. She then thought for a while. Returning, she proclaimed that we would, Allah-willing, land after a few moments. I also thanked her by offering her a gift.

We must not forget about Allah because of having access to equipments, energy and being able to utilize instinctive, experimental and scientific laws as it says:

“...Naught holds them but Allah...”

It is only Allah Who protects them from falling to the ground. It is just like swimmers who swim inside water and they are protected by water. Birds are ‘hanging’ also in the air or ‘floating’ in the air and the air, which itself is a created being by Allah, preserves them, like water which keeps man alive. In fact, it is Allah Who keeps the air underneath their body.

Briefly speaking, one must look out at the birds so that he may become aware of the fact that they have got an on-looker Who looks after them and manages everything and Who is Omnipotent. He is Who has created such beings so as to enable people to take lessons and to receive their share of rewards by obeying the truth.

The verse says:

"...verily there are signs in that for a people who believe."

That is to say: There are abundant reasoning involved in this matter for the believers as to the unity and potentialities of Allah. Obviously, it is only the believers who benefit from such dear evidences.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 80

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَناً وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِن جُلُودِ الاَنْعَامِ بُيُوتاً تَسْتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَصْوَافِهَا وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَآ أَثَاثاً وَمَتَاعاً إِلَي حِينٍ

80. "And Allah appointed a place of rest for you of your houses, and He appointed tents for you of the skins of the cattle, which you find light (***to carry***) ***on the day of your departure and on the day of your dwelling; and of their wool and their fur and their hair,*** (***He designated for you***) ***household stuff and a provision for a time."***

The issue of the discussion about the blessings of Allah is being continued in this verse as well.

The Qur'an proclaims:

"And Allah appointed a place of rest for you of your houses..."

Truly speaking, the blessing of having somewhere as a dwelling place, is of utmost importance, without which other blessings do not find their real place.

Following His discussion of the 'stationary houses', He begins His discussion with regard to the itinerant houses, saying:

"...and He appointed tents for you of the skins of the cattle..."

They are houses which are very light in weight and you can remove them easily from place to place.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...which you find light (***to carry***) ***on the day of your departure and on the day of your dwelling..."***

Moreover, in addition to these, He allocated to you for a fixed period of time, goods and utensils and

various life appliances out of the wool, woven-wool and hair of the four-footed animals.

It says:

"...and of their wool and their fur and their hair,* (*He designated for you*)*household stuff and a provision for a time."

The mentioning of two words /'a aan/ and /mat a'an/ in a successive way, may be an allusion made to the fact that you are able to provide numerous means for your life out of the wool, woven wool and the hair of the four-footed animals, and utilize them.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 81

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلاَلاً وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِنَ الْجِبَالَ أَكْنَاناً وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُم بَأْسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْلِمُونَ

81. "And Allah appointed shadows for you, out of what He has created, and appointed shelters for you of the mountains; and He appointed garments for you to protect you from heat* (*and cold*)*, and garments to protect you from your* (*other*) *violence. Even so does He complete His favours upon you; that haply you will surrender* (*to Him*)*."

The Arabic term /'akn an/ is the plural form of /kinn/ which refers to an object that is the means for covering something. The objective in this verse is the caves and the tunnels which run under the mountains.

In the previous verse, Allah dealt with the blessing of a dwelling place for the inhabitants of the town and the blessing of tent for the moving tribes and their removable dwelling places. In this verse, He deals with the blessings of the caves for the cave-dwelling people.

The verse says:

"And Allah appointed shadows for you, out of what He has created, and appointed shelters for you of the mountains; and He appointed garments for you to protect you from heat* (*and cold*)*..."

From among the garments the name /sar abil/ signifies 'shirts' which are sorts of usual clothing for women, men, children as well as adults in all cases and for all circumstances and which can cover the whole body.

Here, the Holy Qur'an mentions only the 'protection from heat' while garments are mostly used for protection from cold and not merely from heat. The reason is that whatever protects people from heat it will protect them from cold as well.

Moreover, in their locality the Arabs were facing more with heat than with cold. Thus, they needed something to protect them from heat. In addition, by talking about one of two things, the Arabs overlook the second for the second goes without saying.

The verse continues saying:

"...and garments to protect you from your (other) violence..."

This may refer to the meaning that He has provided you with 'iron-garments' 'armours' so as to protect you from being beaten by bullets, blades, and the hostile arrows.

Such is the way by which Allah has completed His worldly favours for you. You may perhaps know, O' the inhabitants of Mecca, that no one else but Allah is able to perform such acts, then worship Him alone and believe in His Prophet (S).

The verse says:

"...Even so does He complete His favours upon you; that haply you will surrender (to Him)."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 82

فإِن تَوَلَّوْا فإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلاَغُ الْمُبِينُ

82. "So (O' Prophet!) if they turn away, then on you is (incumbent) only the clear conveyance (of the message)."

To provide the blessed Prophet of Islam (S) with comfort, He implies that if they turn away and disbelieve in you, and / or do not meditate upon Our blessings, thus not take an example, you are not to be blamed, because you are not commissioned to perform any other duty than delivering the message, and you have performed this duty well.

The holy verse says:

"So (O' Prophet!) if they turn away, then on you is (incumbent) only the clear conveyance (of the message)."

Incidentally, if a man does not possess a sound mind, the most transparent messages from the most virtuous individuals, i.e. prophets, will have no impact on him.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 83

يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

83. "They recognize the blessing of Allah, then they deny it, and most of them are ungrateful."

To complete the discussion, the Holy Qur'an asserts that they know the blessings of Allah and are familiar with their dimensions while delving into their depth. Nevertheless, they deny them.

The verse says:

"They recognize the blessing of Allah, then they deny it…"

Therefore, one must not be on the look out for the reason of this paganism in their lack of awareness. On the contrary, one must be searching this factor of paganism in their other vicious attributes which have obstructed them in their pursuit of faith, which comprise their selfishness and in their hostile attitude towards religion.

It is perhaps for this reason that He concludes the verse by saying:

"…and most of them are ungrateful."

The Qur'an has repeatedly raised the issue of the deliberate and obstinate denial of the disbelievers.

At times it says:

"And they denied them unjustly and proudly while their souls had been convinced with them…"[1]

At other times, it says:

"…they recognize him (the Prophet) as they recognize their sons…"[2]

At other times, He says:

"…but a group of them most surely conceal the truth while they know (it)…"[3]

And, Finally, He declares:

"…when there came to them that which they recognized (to be Truth), they disbelieved in it…" [4]

Imam Sadiq (as) remarks:

Once: Ali-Ibn-Abi-Talib (as) was in the stage of bowing in his prayer rituals in the Prophet's mosque, when he offered his ring to a poor man, upon which occasion the 55th verse of Surah Al-Ma'idah was revealed indicating that your guardians are Allah, the Prophet, and he who spends out while bowing in his prayer rituals.[5]

Some found out about their guardian yet rejected him.

Then, this verse was revealed saying:

"They recognize the blessing of Allah, then they deny it..."

Imam Sadiq (as) has said:

"Swearing to Allah, we are the blessings which Allah has accorded His servants, and only under the auspices of us the people will be salvaged."[6]

1. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 14
2. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 146
3. Ibid
4. Surah Al-Bqarah, No. 2, verse 89
5. N￼r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 72
6. Ibid

Section 12: Apostle Muhammad a Witness Over All Witnesses

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 84

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيداً ثُمَّ لاَ يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلاَ هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ

84. "And (remember) the Day We will raise up a witness from every nation. Then, shall no permission be given to those who disbelieved, nor shall they be allowed to make amends."

The issue of the witnesses of the Day of Resurrection has been repeatedly propoused in the Qur'an. The prophets, angles, Allah's saints, the earth as well as one's bodily organs are among the witnesses on that Day.

Imam Sadiq (as) has remarked:

"There is an 'Imam' a 'leader' for every nation and for every period with whom people will be mustered."

Imam Baqir (as) has mentioned concerning the verse:

"We are verily the witnesses of this nation."

Although the Almighty is Omnipresent and Omniscient as to everything, the fact that numerous witnesses are there to testify and bear witness will lead to the emergence of men of virtue and abstinence for the faithful, and will lead to the exposing of the scandals of the culprits.

The necessary pre-requisite for bearing witness is one's knowledge. Therefore, Allah's saints, who will bear testimony for us in the day of resurrection, must have an observation over our performances in this world.

This is in line with our belief which, according to numerous Islamic quotations, and in accordance with the noble verse that says:

"...Allah will see your work and (so will) His Messengers and the believers..." [1],

all records of our performances are being reported to Imam-i-Zaman (as) every week. If we exclude this belief, the verses about the issue of bearing witness on the Day of Resurrection are not justifiable. How can one who is not aware of our performances or is not just, bear witness as to our acts on the Day of Resurrection?

The Arabic term /'isti'tab/ is derived from //itab/ which means a guilty person asks the owner of the right to blame him so as to quell his anger thereby and then condescend as to his forgiveness.

One is able both to repent of his sins, and apologize for his guilts, and compensate for his wrongdoings in this world. However, in the Resurrection Day, there is no room for justification; nor would any apologies be accepted; nor one can compensate.

Yet, the act of justification is to be dismissed, for when some hell-dwellers tell others:

"...Had it not been for you, we would certainly have been believers" [2],

they will be addressed in this way:

"...Nay, you (yourselves) were not believers." [3]

However, to make up for a sin is out of the question, for when they ask Allah, saying:

"...therefore send us back, we will do good..." [4],

this will be the answer:

"...By no means! it is a (mere) word that he speaks..." [5]

which signifies: The case is not so for he utters such words verbally but he will be acting just in the same way if he be returned to his previous position in the world.

As for offering apologies it is also out of the question, for the Qur'an says:

“They will not be allowed to put forth excuses.”[6]

As the issues involved in the Divine Court are keeping account and record of everything, as well as bearing testimony and witnesses, there will be no rooms left for apologizing, rationalizing or securing the other side’s consent.

The verse says:

“And** (**remember**) **the Day We will raise up a witness from every nation. Then, shall no permission be given to those who disbelieved, nor shall they be allowed to make amends.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 85

وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ

85. “And when those who were unjust behold the chastisement, it shall not be lightened for them nor will they be respited.”

We had it in the previous verse that in the Hereafter there will be no permission for rationalization; nor any possibility securing the consent of others. However, He proclaims in this holy verse that the Divine punishment on that day recognizes no alleviation nor postponement.

Therefore, as soon as the pagans noticed the Hell Fire, and were subjected to the Divine punishment, there would be no alleviation involved for their chastisement, and no respite will be given to them, and their torment will be perpetual, because the time of regretting and repenting has passed.

The noble verse says:

“And when those who were unjust behold the chastisement, it shall not be lightened for them nor will they be respited.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 86

وَإِذَا رَأَي الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا شُرَكَآءَهُمْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا هَؤُلآءِ شُرَكَآؤُنَا الَّذِينَ كُنَّا نَدْعُواْ مِن دُونِكَ فَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

86. “And when those who associated** (**others with Allah**) **behold their associates, they shall say: ‘Our Lord! these are our associates whom we called besides You;’ But they** (**the gods**) **throwing back the saying at them,** (**will answer**) **‘Verily you are truly lairs!’”

According to the Islamic quotations received, there are several stages in Hereafter in some of which lips remain closed when hands and foot bear witness. In other stages one hears crying and supplications. In another stage, one does his best to put all blames for his sins on others. For instance, he would say to the Satan:

It is you who made me pagan, to which the Satan answers:

"...verily I disbelieved in your associating me with Allah from before..."[7]

Sometimes, they hold the idols responsible, while the idols, too, acquit themselves.[8]

Even, Allah, addressing Issa, says:

"...O' Jesus, son of Mary! Did you say to the people: 'Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah?' He (***Jesus***) ***says: 'Glory be to You! It was not mine to utter what I had no right to*** (***say***)***..."***[9]

And, in the verse in question, those beings which have been objects of worship along with Allah seek self-acquittal, denying them, telling the idol-worshippers: You were in fact worshipping your own imagination.

The verse says:

"And when those who associated (***others with Allah***) ***behold their associates, for Allah they shall say: 'Our Lord! these are our associates whom we called besides You;' But they*** (***the gods***) ***throwing back the saying at them,*** (***will answer***) ***'Verily you are truly, lairs!'"***

In the meantime, the resurrection terror causes one to put blame on other's shoulders for delivering himself, but to no good effects.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 87

وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَي اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ السَّلَمَ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

87. "And they will tender submission to Allah on that day, and what they used to forge shall depart from them."

If we do not surrender today we shall surrender tomorrow, on the Day of Resurrection.

However, to what avail can it be? All fantasies will come to an end on that Day, and all attempts to find mediators, reconciliation efforts, and hoping for glory and seeking support from any one but Allah will be out of question.

Some commentators claim that the pagans will lose their arrogance of the Age of Ignorance and will present their submission before Allah, the Almighty, without any deliberation, and whatever they rejected regarding monotheism will disappear from their minds, and those false and empty desires which they cherished regarding the idols will be obliterated altogether, enabling them to understand that the idols are of no use.

On the contrary, they themselves become pillars of Hell Fire, attacking their own worshippers.

The verse says:

"And they will tender submission to Allah on that day, and what they used to forge shall depart from them."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 88

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَاباً فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ

88. "Those who disbelieved and hindered** (**people**) **from the path of Allah, We added punishment to punishment for that they used to spread mischief."

All corruptions have their origin in paganism, as is the case with all decent acts which take their roots from Faith. Those pioneers of paganism, who obstruct the people from the path of Allah by their pen, expression and other means, will have to settle a different kind of account from those of ordinary people.

Up till now, we were involved in our discussion of those misled pagans who were caught in their paganism and deviation without calling others to their path. Later, the cases of those are exposed who are not only misled themselves but they also seek to mislead others as well.

The verse says:

"Those who disbelieved and hindered** (**people**) **from the path of Allah, We added punishment to punishment for that they used to spread mischief."

A well known tradition says:

"Everyone who establishes a good practice, will be rewarded the reward of those who do it accordingly, without diminishing anything from their reward; and he who lays the foundation of an evil act, will be held responsible for the sin of all those who commit that sin, without decreasing anything from their sin."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 89

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيداً عَلَيْهِم مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيداً عَلَي هَؤُلآءِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَاناً لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًي وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَي لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

89. "And (remember) the day when We raise up a witness from every people against them from among themselves, and We shall bring you as a witness against these. And We have sent down the Book to you explaining clearly everything, and as a guidance, and glad tidings for Muslims."

The objective of 'a witness', is the prophet who has been sent to them, or their 'contemporary leader' who serves as the proof of Allah, and We appoint you as a witness of the people, O' Muhammad! This Book, the Qur'an, is an explicit and eloquent Book for all religious affairs.

The verse says:

"And (remember) the day when We raise up a witness from every people against them from among themselves, and We shall bring you as a witness against these. And We have sent down the Book to you explaining clearly everything, and as a guidance, and glad tidings for Muslims."

There are no religious matters which are not concerned within the Qur'an or not explicitly expressed in it or which are not leading man to the sources of knowledge, i.e., to the blissful Prophet (S) and to his true successors or to the consensus of the Ummah.

Therefore, all religious edicts are direct inferences from the Qur'an, as was explained in the foregoing fifth verse which revealed allusions made to the witnesses of the nations.

This is one of our decisive beliefs that every nation will have a witness on the Day of Resurrection and the Prophet of Islam (S) will bear witness over this nation as well as over the witnesses of other nations.

The important point in here is that the testimony of men of Allah must be based on the senses, seeing and knowledge, and they must be innocent of any error or falsehood so as their testimony should be regarded as a kind of ultimatum on that sensitive occasion upon all people.

It is evident that there is no one to be aware of the deeds of people whether present or absent, apparent or hidden, and whose words will be accepted by all nations and Allah in Hereafter, except for prophets and those 'Immaculate Imams' who have full command of the deeds, words, and behavior as well as the minds of all people owing to their invisible lines of communication.

It has been narrated in Tafsir-i-Safi from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

"By Allah! we are knowledgeable about everything which is in the skies and on the earth, and whatever

is between them, as well as what is in Paradise or in Hell."

Then the Imam (as) recited the above verse three times.

Imam Baqir (as) remarked:

"Whatever is needed by the Ummah has already been mentioned in the Qur'an, and whatever you hear from me, I shall provide its Qur'anic documentation if you ask." [10]

Hadrat Ali (as) said:

"Whatever news about you, as well as the history of the past nations, the future generations, the skies and the earth all have been stated in the Qur'an." [11]

Imam Rida (as) said to the chief men of some religions in a session that among the miracles of the Messenger of Islam is one which reveals a poor orphan who has been an illiterate shepherd, being in possession of a Book 'the explanation of every thing' and that all news of the past and future until the Hereafter be recorded in it. [12]

Imam Sadiq (as) has said:

"In Allah's Book, there is a solution for every dispute between two parties though the people's wisdom may not catch it." [13]

The Qur'an expresses everything though everyone may not understand. Hadrat Ali (as) says: For the common people, the Qur'an provides apparent sentences; for some sophisticated individuals, it provides mysterious allusions; and for the saints of Allah, it reveals delicate divine nuances, while for the prophets it presents 'facts'.

Such a trait of being 'explanatory of everything' is either in a direct manner or by means of verses which contain some principles that are leading for us, such as in the Qur'an it says:

"...and whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back..."[14]

And as in the verse which says:

"...That you may make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them..."[15]

1. Surah Al-Taubah, No. 9, verse 105
2. Surah Saba, No. 34, verse 31
3. Surah As-S af at, No. 37, verse 29
4. Surah As-Sajdah, No. 34, verse 12
5. Surah Al-Mu'min n, No. 23, verse 100
6. Surah Al-Mursal at, No. 77, verse 36

7. Surah ‘Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 22
8. Surah Fatir, No. 35, verse 14
9. Surah Al-Ma’idah, No. 5, verse 116
10. Kanz-ud-Daqa’iq, under the verse
11. Kanz-ud-Daqa’iq, under the verse
12. Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, under the verse
13. Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 75
14. Surah Al-Hashr, No. 59, verse 7
15. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 44

Section 13: To Keep up Covenants and Promises

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 90

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَآءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

90. “Verily, Allah enjoins justice and kindness (to others) and giving (the right of) the kindred, and forbids lewdness, and evil and insolence; He admonishes you so that you might remember.”

This verse provides a thorough explanation and the most comprehensive picture of the Islamic teachings in the spheres of social problems, the humanitarian issues, and the ethical matters. At first, the Qur’an implies that Allah commands all to involve themselves in justice and to be generous and forgiving with regard to one’s family members and those who are around them.

The verse says:

“Verily, Allah enjoins justice and kindness (to others) and giving (the right of) the kindred...”

Justice is that universal law around the axis of which the totality of the system of creation runs. In the true sense of the word, it implies that everything takes its own proper place. Therefore, whatever deviation, excess and defect, extremism to the right or left, and violation of other people’s rights run contrary to the principle of justice.

However, as justice, despite all its splendour, power, and its deep impact is not workable in times of crises and in exceptional circumstances, the Qur’an brings the command of kindness with regard to generosity and forgiveness immediately next to it.

In a tradition, Ali (as) says:

“Justice is achieved once you provide people with their due rights, and kindness is applied when you do them a favour.” [1]

After completing these three positive principles, the Qur’an refers to three negative principles which the people must be dissuaded from. It says:

“...and forbids lewdness, and evil and insolence...”

‘Lewdness’ alludes to latent and secret sins, /munkar/ (abominable acts) refers to overt and open sinful acts, and /baqy/ (insolence) refers to whatever violation of one’s own rights, and oppression and self–admiration with regards to others.

At the end of the verse, to re–emphasize once again the above six principles, the Qur’an says:

“...He admonishes you so that you might remember.”

The revival and revitalization of the three principles of: justice, generosity and provision of the due rights of one’s next of kinds, as well as campaigning against the three–fold deviations of lewdness, forbidden matters, and oppression, at the world level, provide sufficient grounds for creating a well–developed kind of world quiet and devoid of all calamities and corruption.

Once we find the famous Companion, Ibn–i–Mas‘ūd, has been quoted as saying:

“This verse is the most comprehensive of all the Qur’anic verses regarding the good and the evil,” it is not to be regarded as an exaggeration.

Explanations

This verse is the universal investiture charter of Islam and the bill of rights which Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) used to recite in his sermons during the Friday Prayer rituals; and according to Tafsir–us–Safi:

Were there only this single verse to be found in the Qur’an we had sufficient grounds to declare that the Qur’an is explanatory Book for everything. The commandments as well as the forbidden matters of this verse have been included in all religions and have never been abrogated.

Walid–Ibn–Muqayrah was so attracted and magnetized by this verse that he declared: The sweetness, beauty, and the content of this verse is such that it can not be regarded as an expression uttered by any human being.

Othman Ibn Maz‘ūn says:

“Upon hearing this verse, Islam exerted such a deep impact on me that I embraced it whole–heartedly.”

‘Justice’ /‘adl/, refers to the cases where the concerning equalization process is comprehended with insight, while /‘idl/ signifies that case during which its equalization process is perceived through the senses.

The concept of /‘adl/ (justice) indicates ‘equality which exists in parts’, while /’ihsan/ (kindness or ‘generosity’) refers to multiplication or ‘increase’ in the amount of reward.

The Arabic term /‘adl/ also implies distancing oneself from both excess and defect with regard to creeds as well as to the personal behavior and the social ones. Thus, the recommendation of this verse encompasses both the individuals as well as governments.

Justice, in the realm of creation, is the secret of its resistance, while in the realm of religious affairs it crowns itself on top of all the prophets’ mission.

The Arabic term /’ihsan/ (benevolence) refers to a blessed word which includes financial, mental, cultural, and emotional services rendered generously. The Qur’anic term /fahša’/ (lewdness) refers to a sin which is a capital one and is coupled with a scandal.

The term /munkar/ ‘forbidden’ signifies that act which is rejected by reason, runs contrary to inherent human nature and is refused by religious laws.

According to ‘Tafsir-Fi-Zalal’, once the despotic rulers, introducing corrupt procedures of propaganda, seek to present sinful acts as insignificant in the eyes of the people thus make people insensitive regarding sins, the ultimate criterion for differentiating ‘right’ from ‘wrong’ are religious laws.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 91

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدتُّمْ وَلاَ تَنقُضُوا الأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلاً إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَاتَفْعَلُونَ

91. “And fulfill you the covenant of Allah, when you make covenant, and do not break the oaths after making them fast, for you have appointed Allah over you a surety. Verily, Allah knows what you do.”

In Islamic quotations that the term /‘ahd/ (covenant), mentioned in the verse, has been regarded as the covenant of people made with the Divine leaders.

If people stick to their pledges faithfully, Allah will also fulfill the promises which He has made, as the Qur’an says:

“...fulfill My covenant and I shall fulfill your covenant...”[2]

In those days of the advent of Islam when the population of the Muslims was scanty and they had

numerous enemies, and there was a strong possibility that because of this very fact, some believers might break their pledges which they had made with the Prophet (S) thus backing him down and withholding their support for him, the verse was thus revealed and they were, hence, warned about the dire consequences of their behavior.

They were told that the strength of their oaths was the proof of their faith.

Thus, the Qur'an has dealt with another one of the most important teachings of Islam in this verse, when it says:

"And fulfill you the covenant of Allah, when you make covenant, and do not break the oaths after making them fast..."

You have sworn in the name of Allah and you have designated Allah as your surety and sponsor for your oath, it is because He is aware of all your acts.

The verse continues saying:

"...for you have appointed Allah over you a surety. Verily, Allah knows what you do."

The issue of /'aym an/, the plural of /yamin/ meaning oath, which is mentioned in the above holy verse, has got a comprehensive meaning which includes, both the pledges made by man with Allah as well as those oaths which he makes in the name of Allah with the people.

In other words, every kind of commitment which is made under the name of Allah and by swearing His name, is included in this statement.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 92

وَلاَ تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِن بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنكَاثاً تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلاً بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِيَ أَرْبَي مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِنَّما يَبْلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَلَيُبَيِّـنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

92. "And do not be like the woman who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces after having spun it tightly, by taking your oaths to be means of deceit between you, (***imagining that***) ***one group is more numerous than*** (***another***) ***group. Verily Allah only puts you on trial thereby and He will most certainly make clear to you on the Day of Resurrection that wherein you differed."***

As the issue of keeping to ones words and pledges is one of the main backbones of the perseverance of any society, the Qur'an, in this verse, pursues the discussion concerning the subject in question with a tone of voice coupled with some kind of blame and scorn, saying:

"And do not be like the woman who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces after having spun it tightly..."

The allusion here refers to a woman from the Quraysh tribe called 'Ra'itih' during the age of Ignorance, who used to weave the wool and the yarn which she had at her disposal along with her woman slaves. She would then order all to be disintegrated into pieces after having been spun. It was for this reason that she was known as the 'stupid woman', among the Arabs.

Then, the Qur'an adds implying that you use your oath and pledges as a means of deceit and corruption, imagining one group exceeds another one in number, thus using the increase in number of the enemies as a pretext for breaking pledges of support which you had with the Prophet (S).

The verse says:

"...by taking your oaths to be means of deceit between you, (***imagining that***) ***one group is more numerous than*** (***another***) ***group..."***

Beware you! That Allah is thus putting you in a trial situation in this way, and, anyway, Allah will reveal to you the consequences of such a trial in the Day of Resurrection, unveiling the secrets in the bottom of all people's hearts, and hence, everyone will reap what he has sown.

The verse says:

"...Verily Allah only puts you on trial thereby and He will most certainly make clear to you on the Day of Resurrection that wherein you differed."

There has been cited in Tafsir-i-Furqan that: Hadrat-i-Fatimah Zahra (as) in her sermon gave in Medina Mosque against her contemporary rulers, recited this verse, indicating that they resembled that woman who disintegrated what she had spun for their breaking of pledges which they had kept with Ali-Ibn-i-'Abi Talib (as) at Ghadir Khumm.

The allegories, parables, and the proverbs of the Qur'an are such that they hold their natural entity, their freshness, and transparency everywhere and at all times, and from the primary school kid upward as far as the philosophers of the world will quench their thirst by it.

One of the means for experiments is keeping to one's commitments, and the recall of the resurrection and the dooms day are the factors which lead one to be virtuous and pay attention to whatever he has pledged.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 93

وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَآءُ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُم تَعْمَلُونَ

93. "And if Allah had willed, He would have made you (all) one nation; but He leaves straying whom He pleases, and He guides whom He pleases; and you will definitely be questioned of what you used to do."

Allah leads all people inherently. However, the people, based on their authority and will, are mainly divided into two categories: The ones who select the wrong path contrary to their inherent nature and intellect and are not repenting.

Allah leaves such people to themselves. However, another category select what is inherently embedded of goodness in their nature. Allah then assists them and leads them. Therefore, what is meant through leading and misleading by Allah comes a stage after the man's selection.

For instance, a teacher intends, from the first day of his teaching, to cover all students in his instruction, though some struggle to understand to whom the teacher also allocates extra time for teaching, while the mischievous child is often left to himself by the teacher.

Incidentally, if the issue of leading man and of his being misled were not voluntary matters, Allah would not proclaim:

"You will definitely be questioned".

Therefore, Allah's question in this connection is a sign of our free will, for the man under compulsion, would not be held responsible.

Anyway, Allah is free in imposing obligations on people, though His way of treatment and programs only include leaving people free.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 94

وَلاَ تَتَّخِذُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلاً بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَتَذُوقُوا السُّوءَ بِمَا صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

94. "And do not make your oaths a means of deceit among you, lest any foot might slip after its stability and you should taste evil for that you hindered (people) from the path of Allah, and for you there will be a great torment."

According to Raqib, the Qur'anic term /sadadtum/ signifies both 'being kept away from' and 'keeping others away', and the Arabic word /daxal/ equates in rhyming and meaning as /daqal/ which means 'deceit'.

A sinful act certainly leads to other sins, paving the way for them. Breaking of one's words paves the ground for evil ending which itself would make preparation for being kept away and keeping others away

from the path of Allah.

Anyway, to stress the importance of keeping one's words and of standing up to performing one's pledges, which are important in social stability, He declares:

"And do not make your oaths a means of deceit among you..."

The reason of it is that there are two main disadvantages attached to it: Firstly, it causes your firm steps in Faith to be shaky, for once you pledge to do something, and make an oath, while you do not intend to keep to it, and you repeat such a cycle, people's confidence will be eroded and some believers may become weak in their faith.

Such circumstances lead them to believe that they have stood on firm grounds at first but they have found the grounds slippery afterwards.

Another disadvantage stated is that you will feel the dire consequences of such an act, which is hindering people from the path of Allah, in this world while the Great Divine Chastisement awaits you in the Hereafter.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...lest any foot might slip after its stability and you should taste evil for that you hindered (people) from the path of Allah..."

In fact, breaking of one's promises and violation of swearing for pledges, on the one hand, would lead people to be pessimistic and would cause people to abhor the way of the truth.

It will also disintegrate the united front of the people and would lead to the loss of confidence among them as far as making people lose their interest in embracing Islam and in case they have made a commitment with you, they would not feel obligated or obliged to fulfill their promise, which would in turn lead to numerous complications, defeat and failures in the world.

On the other hand, it would bring forth the Divine punishment for you in the Hereafter.

The verse concludes:

"...and for you there will be a great torment."

Incidentally, Hadrat Imam Baqir (as) and Hadrat Imam Sadiq (as) have been quoted in the following commentaries as saying:

"This noble verse is about the 'mastership' of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen (as), and allegiance with him, and when it was revealed, the Prophet (S) addressing the people, declared: "Convey your greetings to Ali (as) as the leader of the believers."[3]

The Philosophy of Respect for Pledges

We know that the most important capital of a society is the reciprocal confidence of the individuals with respect to one another.

Principally, what causes firm coherence among the members of a society, who are in a disintegrated and separate group of individuals, thus making them into coherent unity, is this same mutual confidence which backs up and supports the harmonious activities and cooperation at a broader level in the society.

Pledging, committing and swearing all stress upon the preservation of this solidarity and mutual confidence. However, the day when promises are broken one after another, there will be nothing left out of such public confidence which is a great investment by itself, and the seemingly-integrated society will be disintegrated into individual units which lacks power.

It is for this reason that we find repeated and wide-spread talk of keeping of one's promises in the Qur'an as well as in traditions of Islam, the breaking up of which is considered as once of the capital sins.

Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) has made allusions in his command to 'Malik-i-'Ashtar' as to the importance of such issue in Islam and during 'the Age of Ignorance', regarding it as one of the prime importance and the most general issues, emphasizing that even the pagans had been aware of its significance, sticking to it for they had found out about the painful consequences of breaking of promises. [4]

We have it in the Islamic War Commandments that when even one ordinary soldier gives respite of security to one or a group of the enemy army it must be observed by all Muslims.

Historians and commentators are of the opinion that among reasons which caused groups of people to embrace the Great Divine way, was the Muslims' keeping to their promises and having regards for their oaths.

This went as far as we read in quotations from Salman-i-Farsi (R.A.) who said:

"The extermination of this nation might be only brought about because of their breach of treaties."[5]

That is, as keeping of one's promise will bring about power, splendor and progress, breaking of one's promises will also result in his weakness, inability and his self-annihilation.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 95

وَلاَ تَشْتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَناً قَلِيلاً إِنَّمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

95. "And do not sell Allah's covenant for a meagre price; for verily that which is with Allah is

better for you, if you only know.”

The Occasion of the Revelation

As for the occasion of the revelation of this noble verse and the two consecutive verses, it has been reported that: a man from among the inhabitants of ‘Hadar-Maut’ came up to the Prophet (S) and said:

O’ Messenger of Allah! I have got a neighbour called ’Imra’-ul-Qays who has usurped part of my land.

Summoning ’Imra’-ul-Qays, the Prophet (S) questioned him about the subject and made him go through the process of oath taking when he denied everything.

As soon as he stood up to deliver his oath, the Prophet (S), respiting him, reminded him of thinking about the oath at first and then swearing. The two then returned and it was then that the verse was revealed.

He warned them against the dire consequences of the wrong and false taking of oaths. When the Prophet (S) recited these two verses for them, ’Imra’-ul-Qays said:

“It is true. I have usurped part of his land though I do not know the exact scale of usurpation. Such being the case, he can have it back, and besides that he may take the equal of it for the use I have made during the period of usurpation.

It was at this time that verse 97 was revealed and gave good tidings of /hay at-i-tayyibah/ (good life) for those whose good acts are coupled with their faith.”

Following the previous verses in connection with the nasty and evil act of breaking one’s promise and of lying by oath, this verse stresses the same subject.

The only difference being that the motive for breaking promise and swearing falsely was being threatened as against the majority in terms of numerical matters, while, in here, the issue is the motive of insignificant and scanty material benefits.

Therefore, the Holy Qur’an implies that you should not exchange Allah’s covenant for an insignificant price; that is, whatever of pricing you name is unmatched and insignificant in comparison with the worth of one moment in fulfilling the pledges which you have made with Allah even if all the world were to be given to you.

The verse says:

“And do not sell Allah’s covenant for a meagre price…”

To offer further proofs, the Qur’an adds implying that whatever is with Allah, is best for you if you know, that is, if you are aware of the difference between what is right and what is wrong.

The verse continues saying:

"...for verily that which is with Allah is better for you, if you only know."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 96

مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُو يَعْمَلُونَ

96. "What is with you comes to an end, and what is with Allah will endure, and certainly We will pay those who were (patiently) steadfast a recompense in proportion to the best they used to do."

In this noble verse, the Qur'an explains the reason for the superiority as such: what is with you is perishable, but what is with Allah is everlasting and enduring; and those who keep their perseverance would be rewarded with the best of what they did.

The Qur'an offers the criterion for the excellence in this verse, saying: What is with you is ultimately mortal and would perish, whereas what is with Allah will be everlasting and eternal.

Therefore, come and put to use all your capital for Allah and in His path and for the sake of attaining His consent so that it becomes an example and a symbol of '***with Allah***' and consonant with.

'***Whatever is with Allah will last***'.

The verse says:

"What is with you comes to an end, and what is with Allah will endure..."

Then the holy verse implies that Allah shall reward them as the best of their acts, all those who keep their patience and resistance in the process of realization of His commandments in the face of oaths and promises.

The verse says:

"...and certainly We will pay those who were (patiently) steadfast a recompense in proportion to the best they used to do."

The reason why the term 'best' is used in this connection, is that all of a person's good deeds are not identical; some are good; some others are better, nevertheless Allah places all as the best and rewards them accordingly which case is the utmost kind of generosity on His part.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 97

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحاً مِن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

97. "Whoever does a righteous deed, whether male or female, and is a believer, We shall certainly give him to live a goodly pure life and, definitely, We will pay them a recompense in proportion to the reward for the best of what they used to do."

'A goodly pure life' is that a person has a restful heart, and a faithful spirit. Such a believer whose insight is furnished by the light of Allah, he will be in composed by the prayers of the angels, and he will receive the favours of Allah. The people of this kind will have neither fear nor grieve.

This verse states, as a general rule, that the result of the righteous deeds of every believer and in any form that they be performed will be rewarded with the best scale of good deeds.

The verse says:

"Whoever does a righteous deed, whether male or female, and is a believer, We shall certainly give him to live a goodly pure life and, definitely, We will pay them a recompense in proportion to the reward for the best of what they used to do."

Thus, the criterion here is 'faith' and the righteous acts emerged from it, and, therefore, there is no other condition for it from any point of view: neither from the point of race, gender, nor from the point of position, and social rank.

The Qur'anic phrase /hay at-i-tayyibah/ meaning 'a goodly pure life' signifies a 'clean' life from every point of view; clean from all pollutions, cruelties, treasons, hostilities, capturing meanness and all sorts of anxieties including all of those things which turn the wholesome length of one's life into a disagreeable one.

In the end, one infers from this verse that a man without faith and without good deeds is just regarded as dead.

"...and We shall certainly give him to live a goodly pure life..."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 98

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْءَانَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

98. "So when you recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from (the vices of) the Satan, the

accursed.”

This noble verse explains the ways for making use of the Glorious Qur’an and that how it ought to be recited, for the fact that the Qur’an has got a rich content is not adequate by itself; the obstacles must also be removed from our entire existence, as well as form the thought and environment of our thought and entity, if we are to discover the true meaning of that rich content.

Therefore, at first it says:

“So when you recite the Qur’an, seek refuge with Allah from (the vices of) the Satan, the accursed.”

Certainly, the aim is not merely to recite the sentence “*I refuge with Allah from (the vices of) the Satan, the accursed*”, but one must turn the term ‘mentioning’ into ‘thinking’ so that this thinking becomes a pre-requisite for the realization of that state in the self and soul within which man turns to Allah and distances himself from the whims and violent passions which hinder man’s correct understanding, thus seeking refuge with Allah at the time of reciting every single verse.

This makes it possible for us to be kept away from the satanical temptations which stand between us and Allah’s enlivening words. Unless such a state of mind is not achieved, one cannot have a true understanding of the facts of the Holy Qur’an.

A Persian poem says:

The beauty of our sweetheart is not veiled and covered all over; dust off yourself so as you may be able to see it. Unless one’s self-hood is not kept intact from all of what is forbidden; one’s heart will not be turned into a mirror for reflecting the Divine rays of light.

Explanations

Every good deed might also be accompanied by certain defects, as is the case with ‘glory’ the counter-acting agent of which might be ‘pride’; and ‘serving people’ the counter-acting of which might be indebtedness.

The reciting of the Qur’an may also have certain counter-acting factors attached to it, such as exposing of oneself and exhibitionism, the acquisition of wealth, negative competitions, deceiving people, wrong understanding, and interpreting it according to one’s own criterion which serves one’s own purpose against all of which one must safe-guard himself by seeking refuge with Allah.

Imam Sadiq (as) has remarked:

“The recitation of the Qur’an requires three pre-conditions to be fulfilled: a humble heart, a void body, a vacant situation, which refers to a state of mind in which there is no prejudice involved.”[6]

Were the Qur'an to be accompanied by an interpretation, the views of the Immaculate Imams (as), and were it to be presented to the tender minds, it would serve as a means of guidance and one's development, and increasing of one's faith and knowledge.

As the Qur'an proclaims:

"(O' Prophet!) And when you recite the Qur'an, We place between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter a hidden barrier."[7]

The Islamic quotations indicate that the blessed Prophet (S) at time of reciting the Qur'an, used to recite the sentence:

"I seek refuge with Allah from (the vices of) the Satan, the accursed." [8]

At the end, seeking refuge with Allah implies that a lower-ranking person seeks refuge with a person of higher echelon to refuge him and to defend him against the enemy. In the meantime, this process is coupled with expression of humbleness, that is, one must seek refuge with Allah while reciting the Qur'an from the satanic temptations so that one can remain immune from all errors.

The process of seeking refuge in Allah is a recommended act while one is reciting the Qur'an, whether be it at the prayer times or at other times.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 99

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَي رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

99. "Verily, there is no authority for him over those who believe and rely on their Lord."

One's faith serves as a citadel which protects man from all kinds of vulnerabilities. Therefore, the Satan has no control over those who believe in Allah and trust Him. That is, he cannot compel them to be pagans and to commit sins.

The verse says:

"Verily, there is no authority for him over those who believe and rely on their Lord."

Traditions

1. Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

"Rely on Allah, Glory be to Him, since He has guaranteed the sufficiency of those who rely (on Him)."

2. Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

“He who trusts in Allah, He will suffice him and make him independent.”[9]

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 100

إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَي الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ

100. “His authority is only over those who befriend him,** (**following him**)**, and those who associate others with Him.”

Real monotheists are insured. However, he who looks for other than Allah can receive and is liable to receive wrong influences. Thus, in this noble verse, the Qur’an declares that the Satan’s domination extends over only all those who admire him and his leadership, and they have selected him as to supervise and guide them.

The Satan also has a domineering role for those who have placed him as a partner for Allah in obeying and in serving him, and those who consider his commandments as a ‘must’ instead of the commandments of Allah.

The holy verse says:

“His authority is only over those who befriend him,** (**following him**)**, and those who associate others with Him.”

Thus, the Satanically domination over men is not a compulsory and an unconscious matter. On the other hand, it is human beings who pave the way for Satan’s entry into their realm of life.

1. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 231; and Mizan-al-Hikmah, p. 3496
2. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 40
3. The commentaries: Furqan, Burhan, Majma‘-ul-Bayan and Atyab-ul-Bayan
4. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, letter No. 53
5. See Majma‘-ul-Bayan, under the verse in question
6. Tafsir-i-Furqan
7. Surah Al-’Isra’, No. 17, verse 45
8. Tafsir-i-Kanz-ud-Daqa’iq
9. Mu‘jam Qurar, vol. 3, p. 3167

Section 14: Qur’an Brought Down by the Holy

Spirit

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 101

وإِذَا بَدَّلْنَآ ءَايَةً مَّكَانَ ءَايَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

101. "And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse, and Allah is well aware of what He sends down, they say: 'You are only a forger.' Nay, most of them do not know."

The Occasion of the Revelation

Ibn-i-'Abbas says:

The pretext seeking pagans used to claim that Muhammad (S) had made an object of ridicule out of his companions, whenever a verse was revealed and contained some harsh commandments in it and at other time another verse was revealed and a more lenient decree was involved in it, they used to say:

Today he decrees one thing while tomorrow he forbids that same order, all of which exhibits the fact that Muhammad (S) claims everything by himself and not from the sphere of Allah. It was at this time that the verse was revealed and provided them with the appropriate answer.

This verse explains the objections which the pagans had with regard to the Divine verses.

Firstly, the Holy Qur'an implies that when Allah (s.w.t.) converts a verse into another one (thus abrogating a decree), that is, He replaces one verse with another one, pagans say: You are involved in accusations.

However, most of them do not know the truth, for Allah is knowledgeable about the commandments which He sends. Therefore, He sends orders according to those circumstances which are required.

The verse says:

"And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse, and Allah is well aware of what He sends down, they say: 'You are only a forger.' Nay, most of them do not know."

They do not know that the Qur'an is seeking to set up the human society which is pioneering in every respect and with a superior kind of spirituality. Despite all these, it is obvious that this Divine prescription sometimes required some changes and conversions from the side of Allah.

Certainly, they are unaware of these facts and know nothing about the conditions which have brought

about the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, otherwise, they knew that the discarding of certain commandments and verses of the Qur'an is a pre-determined well-calculated and exact procedure of Islam for educational purposes without which the ultimate attainment of the evolutionary process can not be achieved and can not be regarded as reasons allegedly for contradictory statements by the Prophet (S) or false accusations to Allah:

"Nay, most of them do not know."

Nevertheless, most of them do not know that this abrogation is done by Him alone or they are unaware that such a process is allowed, or what is the reason that a commandment alters.

Explanations

Sometimes a physician changes his prescription for his patient. This kind of change is found in the verses and commandments by the Wise, the Omniscient, which is called 'abrogation'.

The religion has got two sets of rules: constant and changeable, both of which cases are ordained by Him.

Certainly, all the Divine rules are holding true at their own time and conditions.

The changes of the Divine rules are not the signs of skepticism or regret, or because of scientific development, or experimental development and, finally, due to the weaknesses in the legislation system. On the contrary, they exhibit the fact that they are caused by precautionary measures taken and wisdom, as well as having the environmental conditions in mind. Allah knows.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 102

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

102. "Say: 'The Holy Spirit has brought it down** (**unto you**) **from your Lord with the truth, in order to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good news for the Muslims'."

This noble verse, following the course set by the previous issue, emphasizes on ordering the Prophet (S) to do as follows:

"Say: 'The Holy Spirit has brought it down** (**unto you**) **from your Lord with the truth..."

The 'Holy Spirit' or 'Rūh-ul-Ghudus', mentioned here, is the same messenger of the Divine revelations or 'Gabriel, the Confident'. It is he who upon the Divine command reveals the verses to the Prophet (S), whether they are abrogative or abrogated, they are verses which are all with the truth and are for the training of Man.

It is for this reason that following it the Qur'an proclaims in implication that the aim is to enable the believers to stand on firmer grounds in their course of action and to provide guidance and good news for the general Muslims.

The verse continues saying:

"...in order to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good news for the Muslims'."

Anyway, in order to strengthen the people's power of faith and to cover the road to guidance and good news, sometimes, there is no other means provided except short-term schedules and temporary programs which will later be replaced by final and constant procedures. Such is the way which constitutes the secret of the existence of the 'abrogative' and the 'abrogated' in the Divine verses.

In the final analysis, the alterations introduced in the entire content of the Qur'an, as well as each of the rules, are authentic in their own particular circumstances are right, and the pre-condition for receiving guidance and good news is having a healthy spirit and being submitted.

Incidentally, concerning the revelation of the Qur'an both the Qur'anic phrase /'anzaln a/ has been employed in the course of the revelation as in

"We have sent it down by the Grand Night"[1],

and

"We have sent it down gradually in portions."[2]

It is because the Qur'an has got two methods of revelation: one is when it has been instantly revealed to the Prophet (S) on the Night of 'Qadr'. The other method is the one which has been gradually achieved and revealed in the course of 23 years.[3]

The difference between the Arabic term /tanzil/ and /'inzal/ is that the former implies 'bring down gradually' and the latter means 'bringing down all at once'. This difference, which is seen in the verses of the Qur'an, can be taken as an indication to the above kinds of descent.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 103

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَٰذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ

103. "And certainly We know that they say: 'Only a mortal teaches him'. The language of him at whom they hint is outlandish, while this (***Qur'an***) ***is clear Arabic."***

It seems apparently there was a non-Arab person living in Mecca and the pagans accused the blissful

Prophet (S) of receiving the Qur’anic instructions from him and he ascribed them to Allah, while one may raise the issue as how could a person teach the other if they did not know each other’s language?

And how is it that no one claimed at that time that he had been the instructor of the Prophet? And how is it that the words which were revealed in the course of 23 years and under various circumstances did not contradict one another?

And why is it that the said instructor himself did not claim to be a prophet himself? And how is it that no one has answered the challenge of the Qur’an that were even one Surah to be produced by anyone, the Qur’an would take its claim back?

And how is it that words uttered during the ‘Age of Ignorance’ have not been even partially discovered and their secrets revealed by the scientists even to-day? And how is it that a Book, a Surah of which has not even been produced by the dissident Arabs, could have been brought forward and taught by a non-Arab?

At any rate, this noble verse refers indirectly and in a correct way to the pretexts for accusations set forth by the opponents to the Prophet (S) of Islam, saying that Allah knows that they claim a man instructs these verses to him.

The Holy Qur’an obliterates all these unfounded and groundless accusations and claims with a decisive response, implying that they are heedless of the fact that: the language of him to whom they ascribe the Qur’an is not Arabic, while this Qur’an is revealed through the Arabic language which is eloquent and explicit.

The verse says:

“And certainly We know that they say: ‘Only a mortal teaches him’. The language of him at whom they hint is outlandish, while this* (*Qur’an*) *is clear Arabic.”

One can infer from this verse that the miracle performed by the Qur’an is not confined to its content. On the contrary, the words employed by the Qur’an are also reaching the heights of miracle, while attraction, sweetness, and particular harmony are to be found in its words and structural forms of sentences are beyond the power of men.

To sum up, the Arabic term /yalhad□n/ is derived from /’ilh ad/ which signifies deviation of the right toward what is wrong, and sometimes it refers to all kinds of deviation. In this context, it alludes to the fact that professional accusers and liars sought to ascribe the Qur’an to a man and considered him to be the teacher of the Prophet (S).

The Qur’anic terms /’i‘jam/ and /‘ajmah/ originally means ambiguity and /’a‘jami/ refers to the person who has shortcoming in his expression, whether an Arab or a non-Arab. As the Arabs were faced with lack of information from the part of non-Arabs, they used to call others as /‘ajam/.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 104

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لاَ يَهْدِيهِمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

104. “Verily, those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them and they will have a painful punishment.”

With a threatening tone, the Qur’an deals in this verse with the fact that such accusations and deviations are all caused by their lack of faith which has penetrated all their selves.

“Verily, those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them…”

That is, they will be lead neither to the right path, nor to the road leading to Paradise and eternal happiness, and a painful chastisement awaits them. For they are so entangled with fanaticism, obstinacy and hostility when facing the truth that they have lost the eligibility of being guided, and they are not prepared but for a painful punishment.

The verse continues saying:

“…and they will have a painful punishment.”

It is for this reason that those, whom Allah knows not to be believers, are not guided by Him. That is, His grace does not involve them and they would be left to their own.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 105

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

105. “Only they forge falsehood who do not believe in Allah’s signs, and they themselves are liars.”

In the last two verses, the pagans used to claim among their accusations to the blissful Prophet (S) that these verses were taught to him by a man and he falsely ascribed them to Allah.

In answer to them the Qur’an, through previous verse, implied that that man is not an Arab instructor; furthermore, Allah will not teach all of the Qur’anic sciences to a pagan. Now, it implies in this verse that: The prophet is not the one who ascribes the words of others to Allah; this is the job of those who are not believers.

Thus the Qur’an says:

"Only they forge falsehood who do not believe in Allah's signs and they themselves are liars."

And what a lie is greater than accusing men of the truth, and causing other obstacles to stand in the path of them and those who are thirsty for the truth?

The above verse is one of the shaking verses which concern the ugliness of falsehood. It equates liars with the pagans and with those who reject the Divine verses.

In principle, there is a great deal of importance attached to the issue of telling the truth and campaigning against lying and falsehood in Islamic teachings in so far as lying has been equated with the key to all sins, and telling the truth as the bill or the ticket to enter the Paradise.

The blissful Qur'an proclaims:

"And if he had fabricated against Us some of the sayings,"

"Then We would certainly have cut off his aorta."[4]

In Tafsir-i-Durr-ul-Manth�r and Al-Mizan, it has been quoted from the blissful Prophet (S) that a believer may be involved in fornication or in theft, but he will never tell lies. Then he recited this verse.

Ali (as) says:

"Telling lie is disgrace in the world and will cause the punishment of Fire in the Hereafter." [5]

And also, Imam 'Askari (as) proclaims:

"All evil and nasty things are placed in a room, the key to which is 'telling lies'." [6]

In another quotation from Ali (as) we read:

"One can not be blessed with faith unless he abandons lying whether it is in the form of a joke or is seriously said." [7]

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 106

مَن كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلاَّ مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالإِيمَانِ وَلَكِن مَّن شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْراً فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

106. "He who disbelieves in Allah after believing in Him; not he who has been compelled, while his heart is still content with the faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief, upon them shall rest wrath from Allah and for them shall be a great chastisement."

In the early days of Islam, the pagans of Mecca martyred the parents of ‘Ammar Yasir, a true believer, while torturing them for embracing Islam. As soon as it was ‘Ammar’s turn to be tortured, he declared those words which the pagans wanted him to utter and saved his life.

‘Ammar was then blamed for having abandoned Islam by some persons. He called on the blissful Prophet (S) while crying. The Prophet caressed him, saying:

“If your life is at stake again, utter these words and save yourself; you are faithful all over.” [8]

This procedure is called /taqqiyah/ in Islam which requires certain rules. However, we must know that there are certain cases of ‘Taqiyyah’.

At times, it is compulsory while at other times, one must stand up to the end and utter his words, and not engage in Taqiyyah, like what the sorcerers of Pharaoh did.

They embraced the faith as soon as they noticed the miracle of Moses (as) not fearing the threats of Pharaoh and telling him to do what he wanted, and that they would not abandon their faith. Pharaoh martyred them all, the resistance of whom has been praised by the Qur’an.

Certainly, the act of Taqiyyah (concealing of faith) is not a sign of excommunication, weakness, fear, retreat, loss of faith, and submission. On the contrary, it is a kind of cover-up and a strategy for the preservation of powers and programs.

In Islamic quotations, it has been likened to a shield and ‘guarding’ against ‘something’ and ‘boundaries’.

Thus, in this noble verse, the Qur’an implies that he who disbelieves in Allah and abandons Islam, embracing paganism will be entangled with Allah’s outrage and there is a great punishment awaiting him; unless he is compelled to utter words of blasphemy while feeling heartily in a different way, in which case, he will not be held responsible.

The verse says:

“He who disbelieves in Allah after believing in Him; not he who has been compelled, while his heart is still content with the faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief, upon them shall rest wrath from Allah and for them shall be a great chastisement.”

In fact, there are here allusions made to two groups of people who turn their back to Islam after embracing it.

The first group are those who become entangled with illogical enemies under whose pressure and torture, they declare their apostasy with Islam and their loyalty in paganism, while whatever they proclaim is with their tongue and they are heartily faithful.

Such a group is certainly pardoned. However we must note that they have not committed any sin to start

with. This is an example of allowed 'Taqyyah' which has been permissible for the sake of the protection of lives and for the conservation of powers for further services to the causes of Allah and of Islam.

The second group consists of those who truly leave their 'selves' to paganism and disbelief and change their ideological system of thought altogether.

Such people are both targeted by Allah's wrath and His great chastisement, for such an act causes the disintegration of the Islamic society, thus constituting some kind of revolt against the Islamic government. Such an act is often a source of evil intentions and causes the secrets of Islamic society to fall into the hands of the enemies.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 107

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَي الآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

107. "That** (**Divine wrath**) **is because they have preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter, and definitely Allah does not guide the infidel people.

Sticking to the material world and giving preference to it over the Hereafter paves the ground for one's loss of faith and one's entanglement with the Divine punishment.

Therefore, the causes for their apostasy are cited in this holy verse as follows:

"That** (**Divine wrath**) **is because they have preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter..."

It is for this reason that they take once again the path to paganism, and Allah does not lead the pagan group who insist on rejection and blasphemy.

The verse continues saying:

"...and definitely Allah does not guide the infidel people."

To sum up, once they embraced Islam, some of their material benefits were being jeopardized and as they loved the worldly life they regretted having embraced the faith and once again, they returned to paganism.

It is obvious that such a group, who are not attracted in the faith from within their selves, will not be covered in the Divine guidance, for the love of worldly life, welfare-loving sense, and giving its priority to the Hereafter pave the way for the abandoning of one's faith, the growth of apostasy, and, consequently, entanglement in the Divine outrage.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 108

أُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ وَأُوْلَئِك هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

108. "They are those on whose hearts, and their ears and eyes Allah has set a seal, and these are the heedless ones."

The rationale for not guiding them has been explained in this holy verse. It implies that they are the ones on whose hearts, ears and eyes Allah has set a seal in so far as they are deprived of seeing, hearing and understanding the truth.

The verse says:

"They are those on whose hearts, and their ears and eyes Allah has set a seal..."

It is evident that such people, losing all of the tools for their cognition, are the true inconsiderate ones, because their offensive acts and kinds of sin have left some wrong and evil impacts on their sense of understanding which eventually leads them to be obstructed from grasping all facts.

The holy verse concludes:

"...and these are the heedless ones."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 109

لاَ جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الاَخِرَةِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

109. "Undoubtedly, they are the losers in the Hereafter."

He who deliberately prefers the world to the Hereafter, on the Reckoning Day he will realize that he is of the losers and he has vainly lost the capital of his growth.

The consequences of the work of such people have been depicted in this noble verse, as:

"Undoubtedly, they are the losers in the Hereafter."

They are definitely and unequivocally the losers in the Hereafter. What kind of a loss may be worse than this that man remains heedless of all the necessary potentialities for his own guidance and eternal happiness and loses all of those merits because of his whimsical desire!

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 110

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِن بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِن بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

110. "Definitely, your Lord unto those who have migrated after being persecuted, then they struggled and patiently persevered; verily your Lord, after that, is forgiving Merciful."

Looking through the previous verses, we find that Muslims were categorized into several groups:

The group who lost their lives while being tortured by the pagans and did not utter a single blasphemous word; such as the parents of 'Ammar.

The group who had heartily faith but they engaged in simulation, like 'Ammar.

The group who did apostate, so to speak, after becoming believers.

The group who sought to preserve the faith when entangled in rebellions, and deviations, by going on exodus and fighting a holy war, while they persevered patiently, repented and protected their faith.

There is another group, referred to in this verse, which consists of those who have been cheated and are placed between the abovementioned two groups, i.e., those who uttered blasphemous words in the form of 'Taqyyah' (simulation), and those who returned to paganism whole-heartedly.

This verse, referring to such people states implying that Allah is forgiving and merciful towards those who returned to their faith after being cheated and went on exodus or took part in a Holy War, resisting all kinds of pressure in Allah's path. They are all covered by His grace.

The verse says:

"Definitely, your Lord unto those who have migrated after being persecuted, then they struggled and Patiently persevered; verily your Lord, after that, is forgiving Merciful."

Incidentally, this holy verse provides clear evidence for the acceptance of the repentance of the 'nationally apostate'.

Certainly, apostate is of two categories:

The 'innate apostate' which refers to the person who is born of Muslim parents and, after embracing Islam, has returned to paganism. His punishment consists of being executed and his wealth confiscated while his repentance is not accepted for the blows which have been stricken to the Islamic society and against the creed of people by his apostasy.

As for the second category which consists of 'nationally apostate' and which refers to the one who is

born of non-Muslim parents at the time of the coagulation of his sperm, then he has become a convert into Islam and, later, he has again become a pagan. The repentance of such a person is acceptable.

1. Surah Al-Qadr, No. 97, verse
2. Surah Al-'Isr a', No. 17, verse 107
3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 97
4. Surah Al-Haqqah, No. 69, verses 44 and 46
5. Ghurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 2, p. 31
6. Bihar, vol. 69, p. 263
7. Bihar, vol. 72, p. 249, and Ad-Durrat-ul-B ahirah, p. 43
8. Tafsir Qurtubi, Safi, Burhan and Majma'-ul-Bayan and the books of Muslim scholars concerning the issue of concealing of faith.

Section 15: Every Soul Shall Be Paid in Full What It Has Earned

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 111

يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ عَن نَّفْسِهَا وَتُوَفَّي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وُهُمْ لاَ يُظْلَمُونَ

111. "The day** (**that**) **everyone will come disputing in his own behalf; and everyone will be rewarded in full** (**for**) **what he has done, and they will not be dealt with unjustly."

The resurrection scene is so dangerous that the culprit and the sinful utter something at every moment. Sometimes, he says:

"*Swearing to Allah, we were not pagans.*"

At other times, he says:

"*It was they who misled us.*"

Sometimes he says:

"*If you were not there, we would be believers.*"

Ultimately, this noble verse expresses as a general warning, implying: Remember the day when every one is thinking only about himself and stands up only to defend himself so that he can relieve himself from the painful punishment.

The verse says:

"The day** (that) **everyone will come disputing in his own behalf…"

However, this struggle of theirs is entirely useless as the consequences of every body's action will be made available to him and they will not be oppressed.

The verse says:

"…and everyone will be rewarded in full** (for) **what he has done, and they will not be dealt with unjustly."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 112

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُّطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَداً مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ

112. "And Allah sets forth a parable: a township that was secure, at rest, its sustenance coming to it in abundance from every side; then it was ungrateful for the favours of Allah. So Allah made it taste the garment of hunger and of fear because of what they used to do."

Those who became ungrateful and were entangled. We have repeatedly said that this noble Surah is the 'Surah of blessings', whether spiritual and material. We note the consequences of ungratefulness of the Divine blessings in the form of an objective allegory in this verse.

At first, the Qur'an implies that Allah sets forth a parable for those who are ungrateful; a developed area which enjoyed utmost safety and security. It was such that its inhabitants were confident in their life and were never compelled to go on an exodus or emigrate.

In addition to its blessings concerning safety and security, its means of sustenance were also coming to it from all places in abundance. However, the inhabitants of that village ultimately became ungrateful for the blessings, and Allah inflicted hunger and fear upon them so as to punish them for their deeds.

The verse says:

"And Allah sets forth a parable: a township that was secure, at rest, its sustenance coming to it in abundance from every side; then it was ungrateful for the favours of Allah. So Allah made it taste the garment of hunger and of fear because of what they used to do."

Indeed, as the safety and security as well as welfare had covered them from the onset, in the end those blessings were replaced by poverty and insecurity.

Point to Remember

Allusions made here to the term 'garment' in the cases of 'hunger' and 'fear' probably reflects the fact that the two serve as clothing, covering them all over, as is the case with the term 'tasting' which refers to the pangs of hunger and fear felt deeply within their selves.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 113

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

113. "And certainly there came to them a messenger from amongst them, but they rejected him; so the punishment overtook them while they were unjust."

This blissful verse, following the previous one, suggests that: The ungrateful people not only showed ingratitude due to the material blessings but they also rejected and denounced the most important spiritual blessing which was ever conferred upon them by Allah, that is, the Divine prophets as well, the consequence of which was the Divine punishment that covered them all over in the midst of their oppression.

The verse, pointing to this meaning, says:

"And certainly there came to them a messenger from amongst them, but they rejected him; so the punishment overtook them while they were unjust."

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 114

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلاَلاً طَيِّباً وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُم إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

114. "Therefore, eat out of what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and give you thanks for Allah's bounty if (*only*) ***Him do you worship."***

Islam only allows one to eat what is both 'clean' and 'allowed by the religion'. Those things such as wine and pork are forbidden in Islam, for they are inherently nasty and unclean, as well as those eating stuffs which are bought with usurped money even if they are 'clean' by themselves.

They are bought in exchange for the money which does not belong to the person himself, thus they are unlawful and forbidden.

Now that being ingratitude towards the divine favours and their rejection of the prophets will lead to the Divine outrage and punishment, therefore, instead of ungratefulness and infidelity, we should always

necessarily benefit from the allowed favors and consume them in the 'allowed way', remaining thankful to Him if we truly worship Him.

The noble verse says:

"Therefore, eat out of what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and give you thanks for Allah's bounty if* (*only*) *Him do you worship."

This verse, as well as the previous one, probably refers to a group of the Children of Israel who used to live in a developed region and were caught in the entanglement of famine and insecurity because of their ingratitude for the blessings.

The proof for this claim is provided by a 'tradition' which has been quoted from Imam Sadiq (as) who declared:

"A group of the Children of Israel used to enjoy such an affluent life that they used to build small statues out of the food-stuffs and, at times, they used to clean their bodies with them.

Consequently, they were led to the point where they were compelled to eat out of those spoiled unclean food-stuffs, which is the case that Allah referred to in the Qur'an, saying:

"And Allah sets forth a parable: a township that was secure, at rest…""[1]

This parable serves as a warning to all those individuals and nations which are encompassed fully by the Divine blessings so that they may abstain from any kinds of wasteful prodigality, extravagance, and spoiling of the blessings which would lead to certain heavy compensation from their part.

This example also serves as a warning to those who throw away half of their additional meal to the dustbins, while at the same time, it serves as a warning to those who hoard the food-stuffs in their houses storage area for their personal consumption and for selling them at a dearer price whereas, they become spoiled and become out of use.

Nevertheless, despite knowing this, they are not ready to make them available to others at a cheaper rate.

Certainly, all of such acts are punishable by the Divine Will, the least punishment of which is withholding of such blessings by Allah.

And a comprehensive religion has also got comprehensive and all-encompassing rules and regulations. It has got a set of rules for both the 'apparent cleanliness' of things which are pre-requisites for their consumption, as well as their inherent and 'legal cleanliness'.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 115

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلاَ عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌرَحِيمٌ

115. "Verily He has forbidden for you only carrion, blood, swine flesh, and whatever has other (***name***)***, than Allah's, been invoked upon it. But whoever is forced*** (***to eat them by necessity***)***, not desiring, nor*** (***willfully***) ***transgressing*** (***the limit***)***, then Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."***

As the previous holy verses dealt with the good Divine blessings and the gratitude which is due and outstanding for them, this verse refers to the truly forbidden cases of blessings and the untrue forbidden ones which had been brought about in the religion of Allah through innovation owning to certain heretical views, all of which is done to complement the circle.

Firstly, the Qur'an says:

"Verily He has forbidden for you only carrion, blood, swine flesh, and whatever has other (***name***)***, than Allah's, been invoked upon it…"***

However, the infection generated by the first three cases nowadays is not unknown to the public today. The corpses of animals are the sources of all kinds of microbes, and one's blood is more prone to the activities of the microbes than other parts of the body, while pork is a factor in itself for several dangerous diseases.

As for those animals which are slaughtered in the names of other than 'Allah', their philosophy for being forbidden does not concern sanitary reasons, but there are ethical and spiritual considerations involved, for, on the one hand, they constitute a campaign against paganism and the worshipping of the idols and, on the other hand, they form the basis for focusing one's attention to the Almighty, the Creator of such blessings.

Incidentally, summing up the content of this verse and the following verses, we can infer this point that Islam opts for moderation with regard to the consumption of meat.

It neither rejects this source of nutrition altogether as in the case of vegetarians; nor does it commend it outright in the case of the people of the Age of Ignorance or in the case of some of our so-called civilized contemporaries who approve of all kinds of meat (including even the meat of crocodiles and crabs as well as worms).

In conclusion, as is the case with the Qur'anic method in many aspects, it explains the exceptional circumstances, saying that but those who are obliged (that is, they are required to eat certain forbidden meat to stay alive while in danger in a desert) if they do not exceed the limits in eating, Allah will forgive them for He is Compassionate and Merciful.

The verse says:

"...But whoever is forced** (**to eat them by necessity**)**, not desiring, nor** (**willfully**) **transgressing** (**the limit**)**, then Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Explanations

The contents of this noble verse are also repeated in Suras of Al-'An'am and An-Nahl, which are Meccan, and in Suras of Al-Baqarah and Al-Ma'idah which are Medinan.

The Arabic term /'ihlal/, derived from /hil al/ means raising one's voice when seeing the crescent of the moon. As the pagans, when slaughtering animals, used to invoke the name of the idols with a loud voice, this action of theirs has been termed /'ihlal/.

Certain foodstuffs have been banned in this verse, but they are not confined to these only. On the contrary, there are certain other cases named by the blissful Prophet (S) which we must take into consideration according to the recommendation of the Qur'an itself.

Banning certain things are only in His Own authority and no one is entitled to ban or to make lawful (halal) anything by himself or on the basis of superstitions and hallucinations.

The rationale for banning certain foodstuffs is not based solely on the sanitation and material issues; but, distancing oneself from the spiritual vices, like paganism, is also another criterion.

Surah An-Nahl – Verses 116 - 117

وَلاَ تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلاَلٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لاَ يُفْلِحُونَ

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

116. "And do not utter whatever lie your tongues describe** (**saying**)**: 'This is lawful and this is forbidden' in order to forge falsehood against Allah. Verily those who forge falsehood against Allah will not prosper."
117. "A brief enjoyment** (**will be theirs**) **while for them is a painful punishment** (**in Hereafter**)**."

These two noble verses condemn whatever analysis or bans which are not based on the Divine law, considering it to be attributing false words to Allah in order to arrive at the insignificant petty worldly goods.

Therefore, this verse describes explicitly the issue which the pagans had raised with regard to their baseless bans which were already implicitly discussed, saying: Stop saying such a thing is allowed and the other one is forbidden by religion, charging Allah with false accusations.

The verse says:

"And do not utter whatever lie your tongues describe (saying): 'This is lawful and this is forbidden' in order to forge falsehood against Allah..."

That is, this is a clear lie which has only been uttered by your mouth. You falsely ban certain things and forbid certain other things by yourselves. Allusion is here being made to the four-footed animals some of which were marked as allowed while others were considered as forbidden by them, and others were allocated to the idols.

Has Allah entitled you to legislate in such a way? Or else, your superstitious beliefs and blind obedience have led you to hold such innovations?

To issue a serious warning, the Qur'an declares at the end of the verse:

"...Verily those who forge falsehood against Allah will not prosper."

In principle, lying and false accusations and allegations are the sources of misfortune and of not being salvaged, no matter who is concerned, lest the one in question should be Allah, the Almighty.

Thus, in the second holy verse, He explains the reasons for the lack of salvation as: It is a meagre advantage which is allocated to them in this world, while they must be prepared for a painful punishment which is awaiting them.

The verse says:

"A brief enjoyment (will be theirs) while for them is a painful punishment (in Hereafter)."

As for the meagre advantage referred to might be an allusion to the dead animals in the wombs which they regarded as 'allowed' (Halal) and the meat of which was used by them.

At any rate, to exceed the limits of what is 'allowed' or 'forbidden' will be followed by both the wretchedness of this world and the painful punishment of the Hereafter.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 118

وَعَلَي الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا مَا قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

118. "And for those who were Jews, We prohibited what We have already related to you. And We

did them no injustice, but they were unjust to themselves.

A question may be raised in here as to why, besides the above-mentioned four things, other forbidden things from animals were also prohibited for the Jewish nation?

This verse, dealing apparently with this issue, proclaims:

"And for those who were Jews, We prohibited what We have already related to you..."

Here is allusion made to verse 146 of Surah Al-An'am which implies that Allah prohibited every nailed animal for the Jews (allusion is here made to those animals like horses which possess single all-spreading bars in their palm of their feet such as horse), and Allah prohibited them from eating the fat of cows and sheep except all the fat which they carry on their back, or that which is found in-between their stomach intestines, their lateral sides or is mixed with their bones.

Allah did that for the punishment of their cruel behavior and He is true.[2]

In fact, such prohibitions, which are additional, are for the sake of punishing the Jews in exchange for their cruelties.

Thus, He adds at the end of the verse saying:

"...And We did them no injustice, but they were unjust to themselves.

There are two sorts of prohibitions in Islam: One is permanent and is for all people; the other one is temporary prohibitions which are concerned with a selected group, like the group from among the Jewish nation which were banned from using certain things for their role in committing oppression.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 119

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِن بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

119. "Yet verily your Lord, unto those who do an evil act in ignorance and afterward they repent and amend, your Lord after that will definitely be Forgiving, Merciful."

Islam experiences no deadlocks and there is always room for reconstruction for man and the way is left open. The acceptance of repentance is a matter of Divinity and is among the methods of education.

Certainly, true repentance is achieved when it is coupled with reformation and making up for the wrongdoings. Those sins which come about as a result of the domination of passions, and are not caused by rejection and out of enmity, are more within the acceptance range. Incidentally, Allah is more compassionate towards the repentant after and on top of accepting one's repentance.

The verse says:

"Yet verily your Lord, unto those who do an evil act in ignorance and afterward they repent and amend, your Lord after that will definitely be Forgiving, Merciful."

To conclude, one must confirm that 'ignorance' signifies not knowing; nonetheless it is also applied to the cases in which man usually knows the right kind of behavior, but is overwhelmed by his passion. In verse 54 of Surah Al-'An'am, and verse 17 from the Surah An-Nisa', ignorance is applied in this sense as well.

1. The current Surah, verse 112
2. This verse (146) in the Qur'an says:

"And those who were Jews We forbade every (animal) having claws, and of oxen and sheep unto them the fat of both, save what is upon their backs or the entrails or what is mixed with bones. This (prohibition) We recompensed them for their rebellion, and verily we are truthful."

Section 16: Abraham Praised – His Faith Made an Ideal

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 120

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتاً لِلَّهِ حَنِيفاً وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

120. "Verily, Abraham was a nation (by himself) obedient to Allah, upright, and he was not of the polytheists,"

Allah has taken 'Ibrahim to be an entire nation by himself in this holy verse and each and every commentator has presented his own version and interpretation for this sentence, among them we may select the following:

As 'Ibrahim belonged to a school to which no one else belonged, therefore, he was an entire nation by himself[1].

He possessed the good qualities and the perfection which one may expect all the individuals of a nation to possess; that is, in him alone one might find the good traits which might belong to each of the diverse righteous individuals[2].

The Arabic term /'ummat/ sometimes signifies the instructor of the good; thus it signifies that he was the instructor of all the good things[3].

The Arabic term /'ummat/ sometimes means, 'leader' and hence, it targets the leading figure, 'the Imam' of all the worshippers of Allah[4].

The personality and the spectrum of his unique existence measured up to the scope of a nation, as he was one of the pillars of the strength of the whole nation[5].

As he (as) was knowledgeable, he would lead an entire nation, as he is required to do so.

As he initiated a movement, he did what an entire nation was supposed to do, without having any companions, he rose alone and all by himself.

It is certain that the number and the quantity is not so important; rather it is the quality which counts and the initiation of the movement is what matters.

Therefore, this holy verse deals with a perfect example of a thankful servant of Allah, i.e. 'Ibr ahim' who is the champion of monotheism. This is particularly important for the Muslims, in general, and for the Arabs, in particular, and it is also inspiring for them who regard him to be their leader and their earliest object of identification figure.

From among the outstanding characteristics of this great man, one may cite four attributes in this verse:

At first, the Qur'an says:

"Verily Abraham was a nation (by himself)..."

Certainly, 'Ibrahim was 'a nation', a great leader, a nation-building man; and in those days when no one spoke of monotheism, he was the champion of monotheism.

Another attribute of 'Ibrahim was that he was the obedient servant of Allah.

"...obedient to Allah..."

He was constantly following the 'straight path of Allah' and the 'path of the truth':

"...Upright..."

He was never in the path of the polytheists, and his entire existence and all points of his heart were filled only with the light of Allah.

"...and he was not of the polytheists,"

Surah An-Nahl – Verses 121 - 122

شَاكِراً لأَنْعُمِهِ اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَي صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَإِنَّهُ فِي الآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

121. "(He was) thankful for His blessings; He selected him and He guided him to a straight way." 122. "And We gave him good in this world, and in the Hereafter he will definitely be among the righteous."

Allah has cited five types of perfection for 'Ibrahim in these verses, and then He offers him five favours and positions:

He was a 'nation'.

He was obedient (to the Lord).

He was not among the polytheists.

He was 'upright' and was clear of all involvements in deviation matters.

He was grateful.

As for the five kinds of grace and positions which Allah had accorded him, they were as follows:

Allah selected 'Ibrahim for His prophetic mission and for the conveying of His message.

"(He was) thankful for His blessings; He selected Him..."

Allah led him to the right path and protected him from all types of misdemeanor and deviation.

"...and He guided him to a straight way."

"And We gave him good in this world..."

which in its broadest sense signifies all of what is good, including a wide range of meaning in connection with the prophetic mission as far as the 'House of Ka'bah and a long-lasting life, alongside the acceptance of his call by Allah, enormous wealth, decent sons, as well as a host of other blessings.

"...and in the Hereafter he will definitely be among the righteous."

The Prophet of Islam (S) was ordered to follow his way of life.

The Arabic term /'ijtaba/ is derived from /jababah/, which signifies 'collecting' and 'assembling'. 'Allah's collecting' means that Allah assembles individuals from a diversified range of different approaches, protecting and purifying them for Himself.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 123

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ أَنِ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفاً وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

123. "So We revealed to you that you follow the creed of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of the polytheists."

Certainly the methods and the conditions of the prophets have not been identical, yet the path of the prophets has been similar and they were commissioned to follow the foregoing prophets and to preach monotheism.

The frequent praising and eulogizing with the same interpretations alongside verses aligned with one another, reflect the utmost sincerity and the position of 'Ibrahim.

Thus, in this last verse, the latest privilege which was accorded to 'Ibrahim by Allah because of those prominent attributes, was the fact that his school was not only to be set up and flourishing during his own time but also it was destined to be for people at all times, especially for the nation of Islam as an inspiring school, as the Qur'an says:

"So We revealed to you that you follow the creed of Abraham, the upright one..."

In this noble verse, He again reemphasizes that:

'Ibrahim was not from among the polytheists.

"...and he was not of the polytheists."

This refutation sentence is meant mostly for the 'Quraysh polytheists' who used to trace back their ancestral line to 'Ibrahim despite their paganism and worshipping of the idols.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 124

إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَي الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

124. "The Sabbath was appointed only for those who differed about it, and verily your Lord definitely will judge between them on the Day of Judgment in what they used to differ about."

The Jews were repeatedly punished for their obstinacy and hostility by Allah, one of which was proclaimed in verse 118 of this Surah, stating:

"And for those who were Jews, We prohibited what We have already related to you…"

The designation of the Sabbath as a holiday, which is explained in this verse, is also another punishment, in which case, certainly, some groups have expressed their appreciation and others have been ungrateful, resorting to dirty tricks, for which they got entangled to harsh cases of punishment.

The verse says:

"The Sabbath was appointed only for those who differed about it…"

Considering the previous verse, the meaning of this verse might be: O' Prophet! Follow the path of the nation of 'Ibrahim; holidays on the Sabbath were designated as exclusive to the Jews, which was a type of punishment for them. Nonetheless, the Jews even differed on this day which was selected by themselves.

Therefore, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"…and verily your Lord definitely will judge between them on the Day of Judgment in what they used to differ about."

However, there are some Islamic traditions which denote Friday is a great day for Muslims, and it is also a festival and holiday for them.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 125

ادْعُ إِلَي سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

125. "(O' Prophet!) Call (mankind) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way. Verily your Lord knows better of him who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best those who are guided."

There are ten interesting ethical decrees issued from this verse to the end of the Surah for social association with others.

This holy verse provides a comprehensive order for all those responsible instructors, professors as well as religious scholars, which calls them to be well-equipped with the various methods to be successful when confronting their different audiences, for one can not invite all those addressed with a single method.

Every body has got a delicate way which must be addressed with a certain capacity through the medium of which he must be communicated with.

The elect ones, who require exclusive ways of handling and reasoning, must be dealt with in their own way, while the common folks should be addressed with some acceptable exhortations. The dissidents should also be addressed with more convenient ways of disputations.

A good advice is the one that the preacher acts and practices according to what he says, and acceptable disputations are those ones in which wrong provocation of feelings and insulting do not permeate:

Therefore, the first duty of the prophets is their 'Calling'.

"(O' Prophet!) call (mankind)..."

All Callings Must Be Divinely-Orientated

"...to the path of your Lord..."

Every single invitation has got a hierarchy. (Wisdom, preaching, and acceptable disputation, in which case wisdom provides the rational method and preaching paves the emotional way.)

"...with wisdom and good admonition..."

Preaching must be done in a friendly manner; however, disputation must be carried out in a friendlier manner, that is, it must be friendly both in its content and form as well as in its methods of expression.

"...and dispute with them in the better way..."

The exposition of the impacts and blessings of what is good, as well as the statement of the pathological effects and dangers of whatever is evil, are included as methods of the calling. (Wisdom signifies being acquainted with the good and the evil of matters by the means of knowledge and reasoning.)

You are liable to perform your duties and you are not responsible for the consequences of whatever happens.

Wisdom and demonstration are always decent means for convincing other people. Nevertheless, preaching and disputation might be done either with the good method or with the bad one. (The terms 'good' and 'better' are not used in case of wisdom.)

Islam offers its followers both mental nourishment (with wisdom), and 'spiritual enrichment' (good admonition) while it entertains logical methods when encountering the opponents.

'Virtue', in its broadest sense, including facing the opponents, means when one is facing the enemy he

must observe the principles of the Islamic ethics.

“...and dispute with them in the better way...”

Generosity and goodness are the two basic methods in all campaigns if shown at the right time and proper place.

In conclusion, these ten-fold duties and important ethical and rational decrees can be employed as tactical principles in every campaign against the opponents of Islam, and may be used as a general rule in whatever kind of circumstances and under whatever conditions and times.

Were Muslims to implement such programs which are comprehensive, we should probably witness the glory of Islam as widespread throughout the world today, or at least in the main parts of it.

The verse concludes:

“...Verily your Lord knows better of him who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best those who are guided.”

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 126

وإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِ وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ

126. “And if you punish then punish as you were punished with; but if you are patient, decisively, it will be best for the patient ones.”

Up till now, the issue in question dealt with the matter as to how one must engage in a logical dialogue or an emotional or rational disputation with the opponents.

Nonetheless, if the worst comes to worst and there is an entanglement involved, and they take up arms and invade, the Holy Qur’an orders in implication that If you are supposed to retaliate, your retaliation must be with what you have suffered and not more than that.

However, if you do not lose patience and have a forgiving attitude, this would be best for those who are patient.

The verse says:

“And if you punish then punish as you were punished with; but if you are patient, decisively, it will be best for the patient ones.”

In some quotations, we have it that this verse was revealed during the ’Uhud Battle’ when the Prophet (S) witnessed the painful plight of the martyrdom of his uncle Hamzat-ibn-Abdul-Muttalib, in which case,

the enemy was not content with killing him.

They tore up apart his chest and side with utmost atrocity, taking out his liver or heart, and cut off his nose and ears, which made him (S) quite upset.

Then he said:

“O’ My Lord! You are worthy of praise and I take up my case to you and you are my help and of assistance in whatever I notice.”

According to the comments made in Majma‘-ul-Bayan, Jawami‘-ul-Jami‘, Burhan, Safi etc, the Muslims, witnessing the scenario, declared:

“If we get access to them, we shall amputate them all.”

Nonetheless, in other commentaries like: ‘Ayyashi, Durr-ul-manthūr, and other commentaries, this quotation has been attributed to the Prophet (S) himself. At this moment the revelation of the above verse took place, upon which occasion, the Prophet (S) declared:

“O’ Lord! I shall be patient, I shall be patient.”

This was, perhaps, the most painful moments in the life of the prophet, he controlled his nerves once again, selecting the second way which consisted of “forgiving.”

And as we note in the history of the conquest of Mecca, the day when the Prophet (S) overcame those stone-hearted people, he declared a general amnesty to them and kept to his words in the Battle of ’Uhud.

Truly speaking, if one wants to witness superior examples of manhood and those of humane affections, he should try to put the story of ’Uhud alongside that of the Conquest of Mecca and make a comparative study of the two.

It is probable that no other nations in a conquering position, has ever treated the conquered one which the Prophet (S) did after the Muslims conquest of the pagans of Mecca considering the situation where retaliation and hatred were the rule of the game within the fabrics of the society and of the social order.

In such a situation, hatred and hostilities were passed down from one generation to the next and a stop to the will to taking revenge was considered as a great defect.

As a result of all this magnanimity in character, amnesty and forgiveness, such a backwardly illiterate and obstinate nation was so moved and then awakened where, according to the Qur’an, groups after groups embraced Islam, the religion of Allah.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 127

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ وَلاَ تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ

127. "And (O' Prophet!) be you patient and your patience is not but by (the assistant of) Allah, nor grieve over them and do not distress yourself at what they devise."

Such an amnesty, forgiveness, and patience will only take effect decisively when no returns are expected.

That is, they are all done for Allah's sake, and, therefore, the Qur'an adds:

"And (O' Prophet!) be you patient and your patience is not but by (the assistant of) Allah..."

Can man indeed resist when confronting all such heart-breaking scenarios, which dominate him all over, without having the Divine assistance and without benefiting from a spiritual motive while entertaining within himself all the discomfort and pain and yet not lose his patience? It is, of course, possible in case that all is done for Allah and with the benefit of His succour.

Once all efforts in the domain of the propagation of faith and calling towards Him in connection with forgiveness and perseverance did not take effect, one should not yet feel depressed, losing patience with a far outcry. On the contrary, the process of propagation must go on patiently and in a state of calmness.

Therefore, towards the end of the holy verse, He declares:

"...nor grieve over them and do not distress yourself at what they devise."

Such a sorrow and grief are due to their lack of faith and can cause one of the following two phenomena to occur: either it makes one depressed for ever and altogether, or it may make one impatient and cry all the time.

Therefore, to dissuade one from having grief and getting depressed or feeling in distress has its origin in both cases; that is, once you are calling towards Allah, you should neither be upset nor should you feel hopeless.

Despite all the foregoing qualifications, the obstinate enemy might yet not stop planning his conspiracies and might go on with his dangerous strategies.

In such cases, the true strategy to be adopted is what the Qur'an proclaims:

"Do not distress yourself at what they devise."

No matter how well calculated and widespread such conspiracies might be while being dangerous, you must not let yourself down and be driven out.

Do not imagine you are cornered and surrounded or entrenched, for your support is Allah, in which case, you are able to counteract and nullify all the conspiracies and undo them altogether by provoking the forces of Faith, persistence, wisdom and insight.

Surah An-Nahl – Verse 128

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُم مُحْسِنُونَ

128. "Verily Allah is with those who keep from evil, and those who are good-doers."

Allah is with those who lead a life of virtue. "Virtue" here signifies the performance of one's obligatory rituals and the distancing one-self from all those which are prohibited by the religious laws.

Nonetheless, the Qur'anic term 'virtue', in all its dimensions and in its broadest sense, includes in the sense of being of virtuous even when one is confronting the opponents.

This means that even against one's enemies, one must adopt the Islamic ethics; treat with the prisoners and captives according to the rites of Islam; do justice with those who are deviants and in a polite manner; to abstain oneself from lying and falsely accusing of others.

Even in wartime situations and in battlefields, one must observe the principles of wartime, instructions available in Islam and Islamic criteria.

One must avoid attacking the defenseless ones; one must not engage in violating the children and disabled old people; even the four-footed animals must not be hurt, while fields of agriculture must not be destroyed; water supply must not be cut off from the enemy and, in the final analysis, virtue must be observed and principles of justice must be applied to both the friends and enemies in general.

The verse says:

"Verily Allah is with those who keep from evil..."

As the Qur'an says in other verses, at times, one must return and show a positive reaction in exchange for an evil act, by which one can make the enemy shameful about what he has done. This procedure may turn the most hostile of the enemies into kind friends.

Generosity and kindness can serve as the best techniques for conducting a warfare campaign if achieved correctly, and the Islamic history provides plenty of examples in this connection.

The conduct of the Prophet (S) with the pagans of Mecca after its conquest, the way he dealt with Wahshi, the murderer of Hamzah; his conduct with the prisoners of the Battle of Badr, his ways of dealing with those Jews who hurt him in all kinds of way, as well as similar treatments in the biographies of Ali (as) and other religious leader reflect the methods included in the Islamic commandments with regard to this.

Interestingly, we read in Nahj-ul-Balaqah, through the famous sermon of 'Hammam' who was a pious, devout, and intelligent man, asking Amir-ul-Mu'mineen (as) for a comprehensive decree with regard to the attributes of the devout people, the Imam confined himself to citing only this verse, saying:

Lead a life of virtue, and act in a decent way for Allah is with those who are pious and act decently.

Although this interrogator was such a truth-loving that was not fully satisfied with this short answer and the Imam was necessarily required to provide a more detailed account and offered the most comprehensive speech concerning the attributes of the pious people, which exceeds a hundred qualities, one may infer from the Imam's first short answer that this verse reflects, in fact, all the attributes of the pious people.

In conclusion, we know that the calling through wisdom, preaching, and good disputation is no easy matter, for some are being obstinate and do not accept the call, while others engage in conspiracies, and a third group get involved in the counter activities, and, to achieve their vicious goals they do not stop doing any thing short of false accusations, ridiculing, threatening, fabricating rival factions, economic embargo, wars, as well as all kinds of torture and hurt.

Thus, these two verses provide a kind of comfort, compassion and guidelines which the blissful Prophet (S) had so as not to be obstructed by any obstacles in his mission.

Last Words and Remarks on Surah An-Nahl

As we pointed out from the beginning of the Surah, what stands outstanding from among all the verses of the Surah is the explanation of the various blessings, irrespective of the material and spiritual ones; the apparent and the latent ones; and those which are individual and social. The fact that the name of the Surah is selected as the 'Surah of blessings' is for this very reason.

A careful study of the verses of the Surah indicates that approximately forty blessings, including the great and the small ones, as well as the spiritual and material ones, have been cited throughout the verses of this Surah.

The objectives of this Surah have been: first, to provide instructions concerning lessons on monotheism and the splendor of the Creator. Secondly, to reinforce the love of the human beings with regard to the Creator of such blessings and the provocation of their sense of gratitude towards Him.

1. Tafsir-i-Safi

2. Tafsir-i-Mar aghi
3. Tafsir-i-Tabari
4. Tafsir-i-Forq an
5. Tafsir-i-Jawami'-ul-Jami' and Majma'-ul-Bayan

Surah 'Isra', Chapter 17

Surah 'Isra' or Surah Bani-'Israel (The Children of Israel), No. 17

(Revealed in Mecca)

111 verses in 12 sections

The Content of Surah 'Isra'

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

Surah 'Isra' contains 111 verses, and it is widely known to be a Meccan Surah. However, some are of the opinion that verses 26, 32, 33, 57, and 58 of it were originally revealed in Medina.

This Surah has been named as 'Subhan' for its first word; it has also been named Surah 'Isra' for the sake of referring to the adventure of ascension of the Prophet (S), and has also been named 'Surah Bani 'Isra'il' for recounting of the story of Bani-Israel.

As in the case of other 'Meccan Suras', this Surah deals with such issues as 'monotheism' 'resurrection' beneficial pieces of advice, and struggle against all sorts of paganism, injustice and deviation, traditions and rules, whether individual and social in historical perspective, the story of Adam and 'Iblis, the Prophet of Islam (S) and his position in Mecca.

The main point in question in this Holy Surah is the 'Ascension of the Messenger (S)'.

The Surah starts with 'Glorification of Allah' and ends up with Praising and worshipping Him.

The Virtues of the Recitation of the Surah

There are numerous rewards mentioned in various Islamic quotations for those who recite or read this Surah among which one may name the quotation from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

“Whoever reads Surah Bani Israel on each night preceding Fridays will unequivocally grasp the presence of Hadrat-i-Qa’im (as), before his death and will be included among his companions.”

We have reiterated over and again that such rewards and gains are not to be attained merely just by reading; on the contrary, they will be brought about when the recitation is coupled with and backed up by meditation, reflection and, consequently, by the obtaining of clues for practical purposes.

Section 1: The Apostle Muhammad’s Visit

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Surah Isra’ – Verse 1

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلاً مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَي الْمَسْجِدِ الاَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَآ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

1. “Glory be to Him Who took his servant by night from Masjid-ul-Har am to Masjid-ul-’Aqsa the precincts of which We have blessed that We show him (some) of Our signs. Verily, He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.”

The ascension of the Prophet (S) to Heavens is the most sacred of the journeys throughout history.

The first verse of this Surah discusses the issue of the journey by night of the Prophet (S) from Masjid-ul-Haram (The Sacred Mosque) to Masjid-ul-’Aqsa (Bayt-ul-Muqaddas) which has been a precursor for /Mi‘raj/, the most sacred trip.

This trip took place within one night and for a short time. Such a trip could have never been in the least possible given the conditions of the time and through ordinary means which were available in those days, in which case, the miraculous and extraordinary nature of it was obvious.

At first, the verse says:

“Glory be to Him Who took his servant by night from Masjid-ul-Har am to Masjid-ul-’Aqsa the precincts of which We have blessed…”

By using the phrase /masjidul’Aqsa/ here meant Bayt-ul-Muqaddas which is the farthest Mosque, for, at that time, no other mosque existed farther than that. We had blessed its entire surroundings with material, spiritual, worldly, and religious blessings.

For, that was the place of worship of the highly-esteemed prophets as well as the place for the descending of the revelation which was a sacred point, with flowing streams surrounded by fully fruit-bearing trees.

Nonetheless, it is with deepest regret that as a result of the crimes of Israel and America as well as the entire over-oppressive enemies of Islam and their betraying mercenaries, demolitions have been carried out around that sacred place and deadly fire-arms cause thousands of crimes everyday there.

Their beautiful landscapes, which are natural, are turned into semi-burned ruins and heaps of corpses of oppressed human beings, who are killed in cold blood, are to be found there everywhere.

The Holy Qur’an implies that Allah’s objective in this extraordinary night trip was to expose to him His sings of power, and wonders of creation.

His sight-seeing tour from Mecca to Masjid-ul-’Aqsa during a single night, as well as his elevation to the skies and his witnessing of the prophets and, finally, his eventual access to the Bayt-ul-Ma‘mūr, and Sidrat-ul-Muntah a, as well as a host of other things are all the signs of Allah’s Omnipotence.

The Prophet (S) had formerly acquired full knowledge of Allah’s magnitude, yet this tour of the skies tended to widen the scope of his observation as to those explicit signs which, in turn, enabled him further to guide human beings.

The verse says:

“...that We show him (some) of Our signs...”

Definitely, it is widely known in the Islamic circle of scholars that the Prophet (S), while in Mecca, was taken by the power of Allah on a night from Masjid-ul-Har am to Masjid-ul-’Aqsa in Bayt-ul-Muqaddas from where he ascended to the skies to note the signs of the magnitude of Allah in the wide open spaces, and then he returned to Mecca on the same night.

It is also widely believed among the Muslim scholars that he performed such a sightseeing tour of the earth and the skies with both body and soul coupled with each other.

We shall, Allah willing, discuss further the issue of “Mi‘raj” following our discussion of Surah An-Najm.

In the end of the verse, the Qur’an says:

“...Verily, He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.”

Allusion is here made to the fact that if Allah selected His prophet for such a glorification, it was not undue, for his words and deeds were so decent and deserving that such a mission was well in line with his aptitude. The Almighty had thus seen and heard him and approved him for such an assignment.

Surah Isra' – Verse 2

وَءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًي لِّبَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ أَلاَّ تَتَّخِذُوا مِن دُونِي وَكِيلاً

2. "And We gave Moses the Book, and made him a Guide for the Children of Israel,* (*saying:*) *'Do not take other than Me a guardian'."

As the first verse of this Surah dealt with the grandeur of the Prophet (S), and as such issues were rejected mainly by pagans and dissidents basing their argument on the subject that how might it be possible for a prophet to be selected from among us with so many distinctions, thus the Qur'an alludes here to the call of Moses (as) and his Divine Book so as to make it clear that such a prophetic mission is not new and entirely a novelty.

Moreover, such an obstinate type of opposition and biased dissidence of the pagans against the Prophet of Islam (S) had not been unprecedented throughout history in general and throughout the history of The Children of Israel in particular.

The verse declares:

"And We gave Moses the Book, and made him a Guide for the Children of Israel…"

It is unequivocal that the objective of naming of the 'Book' in this verse is the 'Torah' which Allah provided Moses (as) for the guidance of the Children of Israel.

Afterwards, the Qur'an refers to the main objective of the mission of the prophets, including Musa, to whom He has commanded:

"…*(*saying:*) *'Do not take other than Me a guardian'."

This issue raises one of the main branches of monotheism, that is, 'practical monotheism' which in turn indicates to 'monotheism in ideology'. He, who considers the 'Prime Cause' of the entire world of existence to be only Allah, will necessarily not rely on anyone else. And those who rely on and count on others do so because of their weakness in their monotheistic ideology.

The supreme outcome of the illumination by celestial Books is the enlightenment of the light of monotheism which they bring about in people's hearts and will consequently lead to one's cutting off of all, and his eventual reliance on Him.

Surah Isra' – Verse 3

ذُرِّيَّةَ مَنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْداً شَكُوراً

3. "(O' you!) the offspring of those whom We embarked along with Noah (on the Ark). Verily, he was a grateful servant."

Noah (as) has been called as the 'second father' of man, for, in the Storm of Noah, all people were drowned except those who were in the ship alongside Noah. It is for this reason that the meaning of the first phrase of the verse:

"(O' you!) The offspring of those whom We embarked"

is identical with the phrase

'O' Children of Adam!'.1

The verse says:

"(O' you!) the offspring of those whom We embarked along with Noah (on the Ark). Verily, he was a grateful servant."

Noah (as) lived longer than all of the prophets and remained always the target of attack and teasing of the pagans, unbelievers, and the obstinate.

Nevertheless, he was a grateful servant of Allah and thus he enjoyed a differential treatment, to whom Allah conveys His particular greetings, by saying:

"Peace be on Noah in (all) the Worlds!"2

Surah Isra' – Verse 4

وَقَضَيْنَآ إِلَي بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ فِي الْكِتَابِ لَتُفْسِدُنَّ فِي الاَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَتَعْلُنَّ عُلُوّاً كَبِيراً

4. "And We declared unto the Children of Israel in the Book (the Torah, saying): "Certainly you will make mischief on the earth twice, and certainly you will seek self-superiority with great arrogance'."

Alluding to parts of the adventurous history of the Children of Israel in this verse, He says:

"And We declared unto the Children of Israel in the Book (the Torah, saying): "Certainly you will

make mischief on the earth twice, and certainly you will seek self-superiority with great arrogance'."

The Qur'anic word, /'al 'ard/ (the land), symmetrical to the subsequent verse, is meant the Holy land of Palestine where Masjid-ul-'Aqsa is located.

The issue of 'making mischief on the earth twice' might probably be related to the two occasions of the Children of Israel: Once to the martyrdom of Sho'aia and the opposition of Armia, and the second occasion is concerned with the murder of Zakaryya and Yahya.

There are, of cause, other possibilities also mentioned in connection with the subject which will be referred to in the discussions following the ensuing verses.

Paradise will belong to those who abstain from arrogance, and distance themselves from every kind of insolence; it does not pertain to the ones who regard themselves as superior to others.

Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 83 says:

"That is the abode of the Hereafter..."

Surah Isra' – Verse 5

فإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ أُولاَهُمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَاداً لَنَآ أُوْلِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا خِلاَلَ الدِّيَارِ وَكَانَ وَعْداً مَّفْعُولاً

5. "So when the promise for the first of the two came to pass, We raised against you some of powerful servants of Ours, given to terrible warfare, so it was they searched inside the houses thoroughly; and a promise to be fulfilled."

The extermination of the unruly oppressors is one of Allah's ways of treatment.

The Qur'an says:

"So when the promise for the first of the two came to pass, We raised against you some of powerful servants of Ours..."

Certainly, there is always somebody who has the upper hand. The Children of Israel initiated a rebellion; the Almighty made other groups dominate them who were superior to them.

To provide power to put down the unruly ones and the rebellions, as well as the withdrawal of security from them, is a decent performance even if a house-to-house search might be required. Thus, all the Divine prophecies will definitely be accomplished fully.

The verse says:

“...given to terrible warfare, so it was they searched inside the houses thoroughly; and a promise to be fulfilled.”

Therefore, dealing in the previous noble verse with these two great vices and the ensuing happenings which are the consequences of them as the Divine chastisement, He proclaims:

When the occasion for the first promise arrives and you engage in corruption, bloodshed, tyranny and crime, We shall send over to you a powerful group, combatant, and belligerent so as to pound you, hence, punishing you for your behavior.

This belligerent people invade you in such a manner that for finding even a single one of you, they undertake a house-to-house search mission. And this promise is a decisive one which would be unavoidable and not to be broken.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 6

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَاكُم بِأَمْوالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيراً

6. “Then We gave you back the turn to prevail against them, and We assisted you with wealth and children and We made you a numerous host.”

Providing sinful people with a respite and re-examination through procurement of their capital and children is one of Allah’s ways of treatment. Allah’s grace will cover both those sinners who are repentant, and the sinful people who have already been punished. Therefore, Allah’s favours will be forthcoming once again and He will enable you to dominate that invading nation.

The verse says:

“Then We gave you back the turn to prevail against them...”

And Allah shall assist you by providing you with wealth, and affluent belongings as well as with children and He shall outnumber you as against your enemy.

The verse says:

“...and We assisted you with wealth and children and We made you a numerous host.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 7

إِنْ أَحْسَنتُمْ أَحْسَنتُمْ لاَنفُسِكُمْ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ الاَخِرَةِ لِيَسوءُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيرا

7. "If you do good, you do it for your own selves; and if you commit evil, it is (in like manner) for your own selves. Hence, when the promise of the second came to pass, (We permitted the mighty fighters) to disfigure your (military) faces, and that they may enter the Mosque as they entered it the first time, and to destroy extensively whatever they conquered."

Such Divine favours will cover you. Maybe, you will once discover your own selves and try to reform yourselves, thus distancing yourselves from all evil acts, you may turn to good ones, for when one does good, he has done it to his own self and if he commits evil, it will eventually turn to him, too.

The verse says:

"If you do good, you do it for your own selves; and if you commit evil, it is (in like manner) for your own selves..."

This is a general and everlasting rule that all good and evil will eventually return to one's own self.

However, it is with deep regret that neither that punishment of Allah may awaken you, nor this favour and renewed Divine grace, for you turn to rebellion once again, following the path of tyranny, oppression and violation, inciting a grave corruption on the earth and exceeding the limits in arrogance and self superiority.

Then, there comes the second Divine promise, and when it arrives, some warriors and combatants overcome you in such a way that the pains and calamities inflicted upon you by them make you grieve to the extent that signs of sorrow and despair appear on your faces.

The verse says:

"...Hence, when the promise of the second came to pass, (We permitted the mighty fighters) to disfigure your (military) faces..."

They even capture your great temple of Bayt-ul-Muqaddas (Jerusalem), then they enter Masjid-ul-'Aqsa in much the same way that they did in the first instance.

The verse says:

"...and that they may enter the Mosque as they entered it the first time..."

They do not even suffice to this matter and they devastate whatever they dominate and capture.

The verse continues saying:

"...and to destroy extensively whatever they conquered."

In the end, whatever is of importance in historical events, which leads to development, can be their

didactic lessons derived from them, and not the details of the incidents.

The adventures of the wandering of the oppressive Jews, which were brought about by the godly believing people, and which have been dealt with in the last two verses, are meant to demonstrate the fact that oppression and paganism will not be left unanswered.

Since this very general and educative fact has been targeted, therefore, the verse has not dealt with the issues of the details of the entanglement, number, and weaponry.

The case is just in the same way that in the biography of Hadrat-i-Yusuf (as), details of the story and even the name of Zulaykh a has not been even mentioned because of the educational nature of the objectives and instructions with regard to the matters of chastity.

In the meantime, some commentaries have pointed out the corruption of the Jews and their eradication on two occasions by individuals in distant past or recent past, and Masjid-ul-Aqsa has born witness to many bitter memories during several thousand years, yet, according to some verses and Islamic quotations, perhaps we must be expecting further violations and oppressions from the side of the Israelis and their eventual extermination by the righteous servants of Allah.

As it is understood from the apparent of verses 5 and 6, there has not come yet such a widespread corruption on the earth to be brought about by the Children of Israel and such an important devastation and extermination has not been fulfilled by men of Allah.

Nowadays, we are witnessing, on the one hand, the widespread violation by Israel and its plot for the conquest of the lands from the Nile to the Euphrates as well as the expulsion of the Muslims from their homeland, the bringing of espionage networks into existence in the world, taking over of the propaganda machinery, assembling of manpower from the east and the west, and other measures which are conducive to corruption.

On the other hand, we are also watching the emergence of the Islamic Revolution and the appearance of the godly sincere youths in Palestine who invade Israel and try to recapture and repossess Masjid-ul-’Aqsa, in which case, maybe the noble verse alludes to these aspects. Only Allah is the Most Aware.

Incidentally, according to the numerous Islamic quotations, which are recorded under this verse in various commentaries, some consider the occurrence of the extermination of the violating Jews by the faithful revolutionaries before the uprising of Hadrat-i-Mahdi (as), those who take up their swords (arms) and who go forth as far as their martyrdom.

They will in turn pave the way for the universal government of Hadrat-e-Mahdi (a.j.). Some regard this occurrence to take place within the period of the reappearance of Imam-i-Zaman, in which case the invading Jews will be exterminated.

Concluding this statement, we must keep in mind that the Mosques have constantly been the bases for

the force of the religions and as a symbol of power. Hence, liberating the mosques from the domination of pagans has constantly been the duty of the believers.

To combat the violating Jews, men of Allah will enter Bayt-ul-Muqaddas in the same way that the Muslims did in entering Masjid-ul-Har am at the time of the conquest of Mecca.

Surah Isra' – Verse 8

عَسَي رَبُّكُمْ أَن يَرْحَمَكُمْ وَإِنْ عُدتُّمْ عُدْنَا وَجَعَلْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ حَصِيراً

8. "It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, but if you revert (***to your sins***)***, We shall*** (***also***) ***revert*** (***to Our punishment***)***, and We have made Hell a prison for the unbelievers."***

The Arabic term /hasir/ is derived from the term /hasr/ which signifies being entrenched and surrounded in an awful place. Carpets made out of straws are called by this name /hasir/ as they are interwoven in like manner.

It is not permissible for anyone to be desperate from the grace of Allah and to lose hope, as Allah has also left the way of return open even for those who are corrupt.

Incidentally, in methods of guidance, we first must start everything with a compassionate tone of voice.

Afterwards, we should employ other means as threats or warnings, similar to the noble verse which, at first, begins with "***mercy on you,***" and then it uses warning and threat in the case of corruption and concludes the statement, when it implies that the gates for repentance and return to Him are not closed; hopefully, your Lord will have mercy on you; but in the case of returning to sin, His punishment is intensive for what you do.

The verse says:

"It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, but if you revert (***to your sins***)***, We shall*** (***also***) ***revert*** (***to Our punishment***)***, and We have made Hell a prison for the unbelievers."***

Surah Isra' – Verse 9

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْءَانَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْراً كَبِيراً

9. "Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is the most upright, and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they shall have a great reward."

The Holy Qur'an is the only Book which contains constant and eternal laws.

In the previous noble verses our discussion was about the Children of Israel and their celestial Book, the Torah, as well as their deviation from this Divine program and their various punishments with respect to the matter. Parts of this discussion have been transferred to the 'Glorious Qur'an' which is the Holy Book of the Muslims, the last ring in the chain of the circle of the celestial Books.

It says:

"Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is the most upright..."

That is, the Qur'an leads the people to the most upright, to the purest and the most sustainable of the ways. The purest and the most direct way in here applies to the ideas it presents. It implies the fact that it has achieved coherence between the overt and the hidden, the idea and practice, and thinking and scheduling, all of which eventually invites and leads one to 'Allah'.

Once reference is made to the point meaning, 'the purest and the most direct', it implies that from the point of view of social, economic, and political organization, which is governing human societies, it offers the purest and the most direct codes of humane conduct with respect to these and, eventually, it encompasses administrative system of government which establishes justice while pounding on the tyrants and the oppressors.

Then, as the stands taken by people in face of this direct Divine program are different, it refers to two distinguished positions and their consequences, implying that this Qur'an bears good tidings for those believers who perform good deeds, which constitute great rewards for them.

The verse continues saying:

"...and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they shall have a great reward."

Surah Isra' – Verse 10

وَاَنَّ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالاَخِرَةِ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَاباً أَلِيماً

10. "And that (as for) those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have prepared for them a painful chastisement."

The Divine punishment all depends on our own deeds, and, hence, that kind of corruption which is not followed by repenting, will lead to disbelief.

Therefore, the Qur'an in this verse indicates that those who do not believe in the Hereafter and its great

court of justice, and thus may not engage in performing decent and righteous acts, it unveils the fact that a painful chastisement has been prepared for them.

The verse says:

"And that** (**as for**) **those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have prepared for them a painful chastisement."

1. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verses 26, 27, 31, 35 and Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 60
2. Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 79

Section 2: None Shall Bear the Burden of Others

Surah Isra' – Verse 11

وَيَدْعُ الإِنسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَآءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَكَانَ الإِنْسَانُ عَجُولاً

11. "And man prays for evil as he prays for the good; and man is ever hasty."

There are frequent references made to the haste by man and his aspiration for the evil in the Qur'an.

The Prophet (S) is addressed in a verse:

"And they ask you to hasten on the evil** (**the Chastisement**) **before the good..."[1]

The verse signifies that: They expect quick punishment to be administered from him.

In another verse, quoting the unbelievers, it says:

"...then rain down upon us stones from the sky, or bring us a painful punishment."[2]

This kind of 'haste' has its origin in ignorance, hostility, and fanaticism.

At any rate, we find in this noble verse and in line with the previous discussions that one of the main causes of disbelief is lack of adequate study into the matters, and it is so because man is instinctively hasty.

Alluding to the matter, it declares:

"And man prays for evil as he prays for the good; and man is ever hasty."

In fact, the man's haste has its origin in his aspiration for acquiring greater amounts of benefits, and his haste for the acquisition of the 'good' and the 'benefits' causes him not to take into consideration the entire perspective and dimensions of the issues.

It so happens that such haste does not lead him to the point where he would be able to differentiate what is truly 'good' and 'beneficial' for him. On the other hand, his passions and low desires will turn and expose differently the true face of reality in his eyes, therefore, he paves the way to aspire and follow what is evil.

It is in this case that man aspires for the evil much in the same way that he aspires for the good, and it is owing to his misconception about what is good and what is evil.

It also applies in the same manner that one struggles to obtain what is evil and to follow what is evil as if he struggles to attain what is good. It is a foregone conclusion that such a great calamity exists for humankind and it is an amazing obstacle which obstructs the path of happiness which in turn results in regret and in damages.

In an Islamic tradition quoted from the Messenger of Allah (S), he says:

"Haste brings forth the people's destruction; if the people did their jobs with deliberation, no one would annihilate."

Certainly, in Islamic quotations, we have a chapter on the issue of 'speed' and 'agility' with respect to the good deeds, among which one can cite a tradition by the blissful Prophet (S) saying:

"Allah admires that good act which is hastened to be performed."

At any rate, 'haste' is a demising attribute when one might engage in his study and verification of the dimension of a certain thing. Nevertheless, speedy action is required in case the necessary process of decision-making has been achieved, and any sort of delays in that case is detrimental. Therefore, it is for this reason that we read in Islamic quotations:

"Speed up in doing decent jobs."

That is, once it is certain and proven that a task is good to be performed, there is no room left for any delays.

Generally speaking, haste is inherent in human nature, but one must first recognize where to use it properly.

Surah Isra' – Verse 12

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ءَايَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَآ ءَايَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَآ ءَايَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا فَضْلاً مِن رَبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ تَفْصِيلاً

12. "And We have appointed the night and the day two signs (of Our power); then We took away the sign of the night (the moon light), and We made the sign of the day sight-giving that you may seek grace from your Lord and that you may know the number of the years and the reckoning and We have explained everything very distinctly."

The underlying reason behind why the term night has usually preceded the term 'day' in the Qur'an might be due to the fact that the 'darkness' of the earth emanates from itself while its 'light' has its origin in the sun.

The revolving movement of the earth around itself and the emergence of the day and the night and their alterations go according to the Divine providence and will, and they are not circumstantial or accidental.

The verse says:

"And We have appointed the night and the day two signs (of Our power); then We took away the sign of the night (the moon light), and We made the sign of the day sight-giving that you may seek grace from your Lord..."

Paving the ground for the acquisition of the means of sustenance is the function of the Divine providence. However, despite the fact that His grace and favor are both in action, we must also go on with our struggle, never to take pride in our cleverness or audacity.

"...you may seek grace from your Lord..."

The night and the day form a natural calendar which is perennial, universal, easy to use, understandable, means of establishing order, and planning, knowing the number of years and keeping account of the affairs.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...and that you may know the number of the years and the reckoning..."

Incidentally, the measures for the organization of the system of creation are not unintended or without due causes. They are all having man as their main axis.

In the hierarchy of existence, everything is well organized, based on universal laws, and distinctly separated so as to avoid any collision, interference, and collapse.

The verse, in this regard, says:

“...and We have explained everything very distinctly.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 13

وَكُلَّ إِنسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَآئِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَاباً يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُوراً

13. “And every man’s record of action have We fastened to his neck; and on the Day of Judgment, We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open.”

The Arabic term /t a’ir/, mentioned in this holy verse, alludes metaphorically to man’s action, for man’s actions are like birds which fly in order to reach man himself. Everybody’s record of action, whether good or bad, will be hung up around his neck.

We have frequent references made in the Qur’an to man’s record of action and there are various points dealt with in different verses, among which are the followings:

1) Man’s record of action is universal.

The above verse says:

“And every man’s record of action have We fastened to his neck...”

2) Nothing is left out of that record.

“...it leaves out nothing, small or great...”[3]

3) The culprits are intimidated by it.

“...and you see the guilty fearful at what is in it...” [4]

4) Man himself is in a position to arbitrate about his own course of action.

“Read your book, your own self suffices today...”[5]

5) Those who are salvaged will be given their books to their right hand and the ones who are supposed to go to Hell will be given their books to their left hand.

“Then as for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say: ‘Lo! Read my book.” “And as for him who is given his book in his left hand he shall say: ‘O would that my book had never been given me’.”[6]

Accounts are kept for all and there are no exceptions. And, finally, all human beings will attend in the gathering place of Resurrection with their record of actions.

All people’s actions are evident for Allah; the hanging up of the record of one’s actions upon the neck is destined for his own understanding.

The registration of one’s record of actions is not a tangible process for man in this world, yet everything will be made transparent and clear for him in the Hereafter.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 14

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَى بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيباً

14. “(It will be said to him): ‘Read your book; your own self suffices today as a reckoner against you’.”

Man will be told to read his own book of records on the Day of the Hereafter. Those people, who did not know how to read in this world, will be enabled to read then and there.

The verse says:

“(It will be said to him): ‘Read your book; your own self suffices today as a reckoner against you’.”

In a tradition, Imam Sadiq (as) is quoted as saying:

“On that day, will one remember all of what he has done and is registered in his record. It seems as if he has done all those in just the same moment. Therefore, the culprits, voice is being heard loud and clear as to what type of letter of record it is in which no minor offences are missed just in the same way that the major ones are not missed.”

Fakhre-Razi is of the opinion that the objective by ‘the book of record’ is here the ‘spiritual scroll’ on which man’s acts leave an impact, and by ‘reading’ is here meant the comprehension and understanding of it[7]. In Tafsir Al-Mizan, ‘book’ has been commented upon as ‘the acts in themselves’.

In numerous quotations, man is recommended that before the Resurrection he had better see to his own accounts and records.

For example:

“Reckon your own account before you will be reckoned.”[8]

Such calculations pave the ground for man’s awakening, and the lack of them are often signs of his own negligence. An Islamic tradition indicates that he who keeps record of his own deeds in this world will be at ease with his records in the Hereafter.

Therefore, one must read his own record of actions in this world in order to reform, amend, wipe out his weaknesses or compensate for them, repent and add up to his scroll of decent acts.9

Surah Isra' – Verse 15

مَّنِ اهْتَدَي فإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن ضَلَّ فإِنَّما يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَلاَ تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَي وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّي نَبْعَثَ رَسُولاً

15. "Whoever gets guided aright, has only got guided aright to his own gain, and whoever goes astray, it is only to his own loss; and no one laden bears the burden of another, nor do We punish (anyone) until We raise a messenger."

Keeping the contents of verses 25 of Al–An'am, 13 of Al–'Ankabūt, as well as Islamic quotations under consideration, one may conclude that the main pioneers of paganism and seduction must shoulder the burden of the mounting guilt of their followers as well as that of their own without decreasing anything from the guilt of the followers, for they have provided their means of seduction.

Man is free to select his own way. Accepting guidance, of course, is to his own advantage, while infidelity and rejection are to his own detriment. They are of no benefits or losses to Allah.

At any rate, this noble verse provides four fundamental and principal commandments in connection with Reckoning and compensations for one's performances:

1) At first, it implies that he who is led straight on, has been guided to his own advantage and the consequences of his actions will benefit his own self solely.

"Whoever gets guided aright, has only got guided aright to his own gain..."

2) He who is misled, is seduced to his own detriment, and will eventually suffer the consequences of his own actions.

The verse continues saying:

"...and whoever goes astray, it is only to his own loss..."

3) And no one will ever shoulder the burden of the guilt of someone else and no one will be held responsible for the crime or the offences which are committed by another person.

The verse says:

"...and no one laden bears the burden of another..."

Certainly, this general rule, which states that no one will shoulder the burden of the guilt of someone

else, has got no discrepancy with the verse in Surah An-Nahl which indicates that the seducers will also have to bear the burden of the responsibility of those whom they have misled,[10] for their act of seduction of others will frame them as the performers of those evil acts and, in fact, it is their own sins which they are shouldering.

4) The fourth commandment is eventually stated that Allah shall not punish any person or any nation unless He has sent a prophet to them so as to explain to them their duties in detail and to complete the argument.

The verse says:

"...nor do We punish (*anyone*) *until We raise a messenger."*

Surah Isra' – Verse 16

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَآ أَن نُّهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيراً

16. "And once We determine to exterminate a town, We command its luxurious people (***to obey Us***)***, but they transgress therein, thus the word proves true against it, then We destroy it with utter destruction."***

The Qur'anic sentence: /'amran a mutrafih a/ signifies that Allah commands the great men of the nation to obey orders, for We must keep in mind the fact that the Almighty will never issue orders as for the commitment of sins and offences.

On the contrary, He always issues orders for the establishment of justice and benevolent acts. Allah's way of extermination consists of issuing orders for obedience. The affluent, who lack conscience, will oppose and the common people also follow them. It is then that the Divine wrath will be decisively actualized and the Divine chastisement and furry will be incumbent.

The verse says:

"And once We determine to exterminate a town, We command its luxurious people (***to obey Us***)***, but they transgress therein, thus the word proves true against it, then We destroy it with utter destruction."***

The will to execute by the All-Knowing Allah is based upon the sinful grounds which we provide and the negative attributes which we exhibit, otherwise the compassionate Allah will never seek to exterminate any nation unduely. According to a statement issued by Imam Rida (as), the Divine Will in this verse is conditional upon our sin.[11]

Explanations

One of the manners by which the Divine chastisement and Wrath is achieved is ‘affluence’ and being immersed in Allah’s blessings.

The existence of a luxurious class in every society paves the ground for the Divine Wrath.

The moral and social decadence of every society is initiated by and is mainly on the hands of that society’s luxurious chiefs.

The affluent who are indifferent stand up to the call of the prophets before all others, for corruption usually has its origins in affluence.

Let us take the Divine threats seriously and reform us, for the executive force behind the Divine threats has its roots in our own performances, and the Divine outrage and chastisement are utterly severe.

“…then we destroy it with utter destruction.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 17

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِن بَعْدِ نُوحٍ وَكَفَي بِرَبّـِكَ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيراً بَصِيراً

17. “And what a great number (of people) We did exterminate after Noah! And your Lord is sufficient as Knowing and Seeing with regard to the sins of His servants.”

This noble verse, which recounts the extermination of a generation of mankind and the beginning of a new world order in human life, depicts the fact that the era of Noah (as) has been recorded as a turning point in the history of mankind.

The life preceding Noah (as) had been an extremely simple life in nature with a very limited population and was lacking in an adventurous type of history. Moreover, the continuity of the generation of human kind had been made possible with the few believers who were inside the ship with Noah (as).

The verse, while warning the ignorant and the negligent and while being instructive for the people, provides a source of comfort for the Prophet (S), exclaiming that if the pagans do not stop hurting and teasing him, they will face the Divine Wrath.

After Noah’s people, the nations of ‘Ad, Tham�d, L�t, as well as the companions of Madyan, Pharaoh, Haman, Karun, and the companions of Phil also were entangled with the Divine Wrath.

The verse says:

"And what a great number (of people) We did exterminate after Noah!..."

The nations who throughout history were entangled with the Divine Wrath and fury are numerous, and the Divine Wrath is not exclusive to the Day of Judgment only. It also may take place in this world as well.

This noble verse presents examples of the above issues as a general principle, stating that: What a numerous groups of people who lived after Noah who, according to this way of treatment, were annihilated by Allah.

Then, The Qur'an adds that such is not the case that oppressions and tyranny, or sinfulness of an individual or a group remain hidden from the sharp sight of Allah. This much is adequate that Allah is well aware of the sins of His servants and He has got careful eyes on them.

The verse says:

"...And your Lord is sufficient as Knowing and Seeing with regard to the sins of His servants."

The fact that the era succeeding Noah has been stressed here, might probably be for the sake that man's life before Noah had been very simple and so many differences were usually non-existent, in particular the division of the society into the 'affluent' and the 'oppressed' and, therefore, the people in those societies were hardly entangled with the Divine punishment.

Surah Isra' – Verse 18

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَن نُّرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلاَهَا مَذْمُوماً مَّدْحُوراً

18. "Whoever desires this (transient worldly) life, We hasten for him therein what We please for whomever We desire; then We appoint Hell for him into which he will enter disgraced, rejected."

As the previous holy verses dealt with the opposition by the still-necked dissidents in face of the Divine orders and their later extermination, this verse alludes to the true causes of such a disobedience and unruliness which is brought about by the love of the world, saying:

"Whoever desires this (transient worldly) life, We hasten for him therein what We please for whomever We desire..."

It is worthy to note that the Qur'an does not say that he, who seeks after the world, will obtain what he wishes. But, it sets two conditions for it: the first refers to that He bestows upon him only part of what he wants, or, in other words, he reaches the very extent to which We will.

The second one refers to the matter that all individuals do not obtain access to this much either.

On the contrary, only some of them will be provided with access to part of the worldly goods; those people whom We deem right:

"...for whomever We desire..."

Therefore, neither do all worldly lovers attain to their wishes, nor those who have their aspirations fulfilled will reach the whole of what they desire completely.

Our daily life also explicitly unveils the truth regarding this matter. How large is the number of those people who seek after wealth day and night successively and reach nowhere, obtaining very little for their tremendous effort, and what a large number of people exist there who have great ambitions in this world and who attain a limited number of their wishes.

Here is an important point of view revealing itself in that, this group, while having been designated to burn in Hell-Fire, are also qualified with two attributes of 'disgraced' and 'rejected' which being applied in their case, each of which is separately being stressed.

The verse continues saying:

"...then We appoint Hell for him into which he will enter disgraced, rejected."

In fact, the Hell-Fire will be their physical punishment designated, and being blamed and distanced are their spiritual punishment which are allocated for them, for one must keep in mind that Resurrection is both 'physical' as well as 'spiritual' and its reward and punishment also encompass both.

Surah Isra' – Verse 19

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُوْلَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُوراً

19. "And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it as he ought to strive, and he is a believer, (as for) these, their striving shall be thanked."

He who desires for the good of Hereafter and the blessing of Paradise, and struggles along these lines; that is, he who obeys Allah (s.w.t.) and distances himself from the sins while believing in monotheism and the prophetic mission of the prophets, his struggle will be acknowledged and his worship will be acceptable.

The verse says:

"And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it as he ought to strive, and he is a believer, (as for) these, their striving shall be thanked."

Therefore, in order to achieve eternal happiness, there are three conditions pending:

1) Man's will, that is, the kind of will which relates to the eternal life, and does not appertain to the passing whims, pleasures, blessings and purely material gains and goals.

2) Such a 'will' must not be in a weak form and lack in strength in the spheres of thinking and spirit. Contrarily, it must call on all the particles of human existence and set them in motion and employ all his means and struggles to this end.

3) All of these must be coupled with faith; that kind of faith which is constant and steady, for one's decision and his struggle will yield results only when they have got their roots in correct and proper motives and those kinds of motives can not be anything other than faith to Allah.

Surah Isra' – Verse 20

كُلاًّ نُمِدُّ هَؤُلاَءِ وَهَؤُلاَءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُوراً

20. "All We succour, these and those, from the bounty of your Lord; and the bounty of your Lord is not closed** (**to anyone**)**."

Allah has created all men free and, by placing at their disposal all the means, He has put them to the test so that their way of acting and choice becomes evident, in a manner that those who deal with Allah are parted from the rest. It is just like 'the organization of water and electricity, which makes these two blessings available to all houses so that the individuals, by their own choice, use them in a good or a bad way.

Therefore, it is Allah's way of treatment to make all the blessings and helps available to all so that every body can exhibit his positive and negative attributes.

The verse says:

"All We succour, these and those, from the bounty of your Lord..."

Certainly, having faith in Allah and seeking the Hereafter have not any discrepancy with enjoying the material means.

Incidentally, Allah's favours cover us and are encompassing us owing to His Lordship and His Own benevolence; otherwise, He does not owe us anything.

The verse says:

"...and the bounty of your Lord is not closed** (**to anyone**)**."

Surah Isra' – Verse 21

انظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَي بَعْضٍ وَلَلآخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلاً

21. "Behold how We have preferred some of them over others; and, definitely, the Hereafter is greater in ranks and greater in excellence."

The superiority of individuals over one another consists of two types: At times, man is endowed over his equals in his aptitude, interest, thinking, family conditions, geographical conditions etc, in which case all are Allah's grace and are for one's testing and are coupled with responsibilities.

This verse alludes to these kinds of superiorities. At other times, such superiorities have their bases in oppression, exploitation and in colonization, which must be considered separately.

The Prophet (S) said:

"The hierarchy of Paradise is accorded to each individuals according to the reasoning and power of wisdom of the dwellers of Paradise." [12]

Therefore, the Qur'an recounts this very basic principle in this verse. As differences in struggles in this world result in differential reaping of the results, this rule also applies in all the transactions in the Hereafter as well. The only difference is that this world is limited and its differences also are confined, whereas the Hereafter is unlimited and its variations also are unlimited.

The verse says:

"Behold how We have preferred some of them over others..."

Note as to how, We made some excel others because of the differences in their struggle: however, the hierarchical order of the here-after excels others and is far more precious.

The verse continues saying:

"...and, definitely, the Hereafter is greater in ranks and greater in excellence."

Are World and Hereafter Contrary to Each Other?

In numerous verses, there are great appraisals made for the world along with its material benefits. However, inspire of the entire importance given to the material merits and blessings, one finds numerous meanings with regard to the humiliation and demising of those blessings of the world in the Qur'anic verses. Such dual meanings are also objectively found in Islamic quotations as well.

The answer to this query can be found in the Qur'an itself that the blessings of the material world, which are also the favours of Allah, and certainly are regarded as necessary in the system of creation, if used as a means for the spiritual development and happiness of man, they are to be appreciated as well and by all means.

However, if they are used only as a goal and as an end in themselves, aloof from humane and spiritual values, they naturally lead to the man's arrogance, negligence, unruliness, tyranny and oppression, and, hence, they are to be regarded as a curse and worthy of all kinds of condemnation.

How beautifully has this been stated by Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) in that speech of his which is concise and expressive:

"He who looks at it with insight, (regarding it as a means of vision), it will bestow him sight; and he who regards it as an end in itself, then it will blind him." 13

In fact, the difference between the blamed world and the admired world is the same thing which is understood from the Qur'anic terms /'ilayh a/ which denotes to the 'aim' and /bih a/ which refers to the 'means'.

Ali (as), regarding this world and the Reckoning Day, says:

*"Beware! Surely this world is a place from which protection cannot be sought except (while one is) in it."*14

Surah Isra' – Verse 22

لاَ تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهاً ءَاخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُوماً مَّخْذُولاً

22. "Do not associate with Allah any other god, lest you will sit reproved, despised."

The blissful Prophet (S) is being addressed in this verse, but the verse is meant for the public who are under the leadership of him.

Man's flourishing nature as well as his glory, rest with monotheism and his paganism and worship of any other being is degradation to him and makes him despised and mean.

Therefore, this noble verse begins with the statement of the issue of monotheism and faith, that kind of monotheism which is the core of all positive activities and good deeds of man as well as his constructive deeds.

At first, the Qur'an says:

"Do not associate with Allah any other god..."

It does not state do not worship any other god along with Allah, but it says: 'Do not associate', so as to present a wider scope of meaning; that is, neither in ideas, nor in practice, nor in prayers, desires, nor in worshipping associate any other god along with Allah.

Then, alluding to the devastating effect of paganism, the verse implies that if you associate with Him any other god, you will be demised, despised and will be neglected (isolated).

It says:

"...lest you will sit reproved, despised."

One can conclude from the above sentence that paganism has got three formidable disgraceful effects on man:

1) Paganism leads to, and is a source of, weakness, disability, and humiliation.

2) Paganism is the source of demise and blame, for it depicts a deviating line and method in face of logic, rationality, and it is an obvious neglect of Allah's blessings.

3) Paganism will cause Allah to abandon the pagan to his self-made gods and stop protecting him.

Consequently, the 'neglected one' is he who has got no helpful companions and is blamed by Allah, the angels, the believers, and the awakened conscience of the enlightened people as well as the wise men of the world.

1. Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 6
2. Surah Al-'Anf al, No. 6, verse 32
3. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 49
4. Ibid
5. The current Surah, verse 14
6. Surah Al-Haqqah, No. 69, verses 19 and 25
7. Tafsir-ul-Kabir
8. Bih ar, vol. 7, p. 73
9. Tafsir-i-Kashf-ul-'Asr ar
10. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 25
11. Tafsir-i-Kanz-ud-Daqayiq
12. Tafsir-i-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
13. Nahj-ul-Balaghah, sermon 82
14. Nahj-ul-Balaghah, sermon 62

Section 3: Goodness and Submission to Parents Ordained

Surah Isra' – Verse 23

وَقَضىَ رَبُّكَ اَلاَّ تَعْبُدُوا إِلاَّ إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلاَهُمَا فَلاَ تَقُل لَهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَلاَ تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَهُمَا قَوْلاً كَرِيماً

23. "And your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and (*to show*) ***kindness to parents; if one of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them 'fie', nor repulse them, and speak to them a gracious word."***

Next to the principle of monotheism, the Qur'an alludes to one of the most fundamental instructions of the prophets with regard to mankind, stating that:

"And your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and (*to show*) ***kindness to parents..."***

Placing Unity, monotheism, which is the most fundamental principles of Islam, alongside with being kind and good towards one's parents, is a further emphasis laid on this important Islamic commandment.

Later, it refers to one of the clear examples for kindness to one's parents, implying that whenever one of them or both reach old age while living with you, that is when they need your constant care, do not spare them any act of kindness and do not despise them or scorn them by insulting them the least. That is, even stop uttering the slightest despising murmuring sound.

Do not shout at them, but speak to them in a calculated kind and highly esteemed manner.

The noble verse continues saying:

"...if one of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them 'fie', nor repulse them, and speak to them a gracious word."

Surah Isra' – Verse 24

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيراً

24. “And out of compassion, lower unto them the wing of humility, and say: ‘My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they cherished me when I was little.”

In words and in deeds, try your best to be humble towards your parents. The objective in mind by the Qur’anic term /�ull/ is not meant to denote humility, but, it means ‘gentleness and humbleness.’

By the phrase: ***‘lower unto them the wing of humility’***, which is literally mentioned in the above verse, is the simile which refers to making oneself in the utmost sense of submissive gentleness towards one’s parents. It makes one recall a bird which opens up its wings to provide shelter for its offspring.

The Almighty thus proclaims to cover your parents gently under your love and generosity by providing them with shelter and care as they provided you with shelter and care when you were little.

The verse says:

“And out of compassion, lower unto them the wing of humility...”

Imam Sadiq (as) in this regard said:

“That is, do not look at them except with compassion and kindness; do not raise your voice when talking to them above their voice; and do not raise your hand above theirs, and do not go before them when walking.”

Therefore, pray for them and ask Allah to allocate His blessings and forgiveness to them before and after their death, for they have brought you up as a child. This very recent one is in case that they are both believers.

The verse says:

“...and say: ‘My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they cherished me when I was little.”

One can infer from this verse that the praying of children for their parents who are dead is acceptable by Allah (s.w.t.), otherwise, there would be no use in saying:

“pray for them.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 25

رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمْ إِن تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلأَوَّابِينَ غَفُوراً

25. “Your Lord is well aware about what is in your selves. If you be righteous, then verily He is for the repentant forgiving.”

Among the Divine powers and Divinity of the Almighty is His Omniscience, and every kind of service rendered to one's parents, is carried out under His supervision.

The verse, in this respect, says:

"Your Lord is well aware about what is in your selves..."

If one is ignorantly having an unsuitable relationship or approach towards one's parents, one can call Allah's grace to the matter by repenting of his sins.

As it may sometimes happen that with regard to one's relationship with his parents and respect for them and gentle submissiveness concerning them, there might be deviancies occurred which one might unconsciously or deliberately perform, the Qur'an in this holy verse implies that your Lord is better aware of what is in your mind than you.

For, His knowledge in all fields is intuitively direct, constant, original, eternal, everlasting and lacks all errors, while your knowledge does not possess such characteristics.

Therefore, if you, with no intention of disobeying against Allah, get involved in an erroneous behavior with regard to respect and goodness concerning your parents, and you regret it immediately, initiating compensation you will definitely be covered by His amnesty.

The verse says:

"...If you be righteous, then verily He is for the repentant forgiving."

Quotations Concerning Respect for Parents in Islam

Islam has stressed respect for parents to the extend that one can find such respect for few other matters. As examples, some traditions are cited here in this connection:

1) In four of the Suras of the Glorious Qur'an, goodness towards one's parents immediately follows the subject of monotheism. Treating the matter in the same row, and equal basis with monotheism, exhibits the fact that to what extend it regards, for one's parents is considered important in Islam.

2) This issue is so important that both the Holy Qur'an and Islamic quotations have explicitly recommended that even if one's parents are pagans, respect for them is a 'must'.

3) Thanking parents, in the Glorious Qur'an, is placed on an identical basis with thanking Allah for His blessings. [1]

4) The Qur'an has not allowed the slightest kind of lack of respect for the parents.

"...do not say to them 'fie'..."[2]

5) A tradition from Imam Kazim (as) declares:

"Some one called on the Prophet (S) and asked him about the rights of parents. He answered: 'One must not call them by name. (They must be addressed as: My Father...!) He should not go in front of them when walking; and should not seat himself before his parent.

One must not be acting in such a way as to be blamed for his parents. He must not behave such a manner that people say: 'Hoping that Allah does not forgive your father for having done such a job'." 3

6) The Prophet (S) has said:

"Let his nose be rubbed against the ground! Let his nose be rubbed against the ground! Let his nose be rubbed against the ground!"

Then he was asked:

"Whose nose O' Messenger of Allah?"

So he answered:

"The one who does not do a good job to enter the Paradise once his parents reach old age!"

This quotation has been cited by Moslem in his 'Sahih'.4

7) Ab�–Sayyid–'Ans ari has said:

"Once we were with the blissful Prophet. A man from the Bani–Salmah came and said:

'O!' Messenger of Allah! Is there any thing good that I can do for them after the death of my parents? And is there any generous act which I can do for them?'

He answered:

'O', Yes. You can do them good by performing the prayer rituals for them; and asking forgiveness on their behalf from Allah; and keeping to the words and to their commitments and making payments for their debts as well as respecting their friends." 5

8) In some of the quotations received, assisting and doing 'good' to one's parents have been greatly recommended and doing them harm has been discarded. For instances, the reward for looking with compassion at one's own parents has been equated with an accepted 'Hajj'.

Their consent is identical with the consent of Allah and their outrage is on an equal footing with that by Allah. Kindness and generosity towards one's parents prolongs one's lifetime and causes our children to be kind and generous towards us.

We have it in quotations that: If you were even beaten by them, do not utter a low word; do not stare at them; do not raise up your hand against them; do not walk in front of them; do not call them by name; do not do what might lead the people to curse them or insult them; do not seat yourselves before them, assist them before being asked by them for assistance. 6

9) Generosity and kindness to one's parents are among the attributes of the prophets as is explained about Hadrat-i-'Issa (as)

"And (He has made me) kind to my mother..."7

and is also said about Hadrat-i-Yahya (as)

"And kindness to his parents..."8

10) Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) has remarked:

*"Kindness to the parents is the greatest (and the most important) of the Divine duties."*9

11) Imam Sadiq (as) has stated:

"The best of the deeds are: Prayer rituals which are performed at their appropriate time; Kindness and goodness towards one's parents, Fighting a holy war for the sake of Allah. 10

12) The prophet of Allah (S) has stated:

"Whoever obeys Allah's command with regard to his parents, two of the gates of the Paradise will be laid wide open to Him; and if he obeys one (of them), one (of the gate-ways of the Paradise will be left open for him)." 11

13) The blissful Prophet (S) has stated:

"The person who obeys his parents and his Lord, will be assigned a highly-elevated position in Paradise." 12

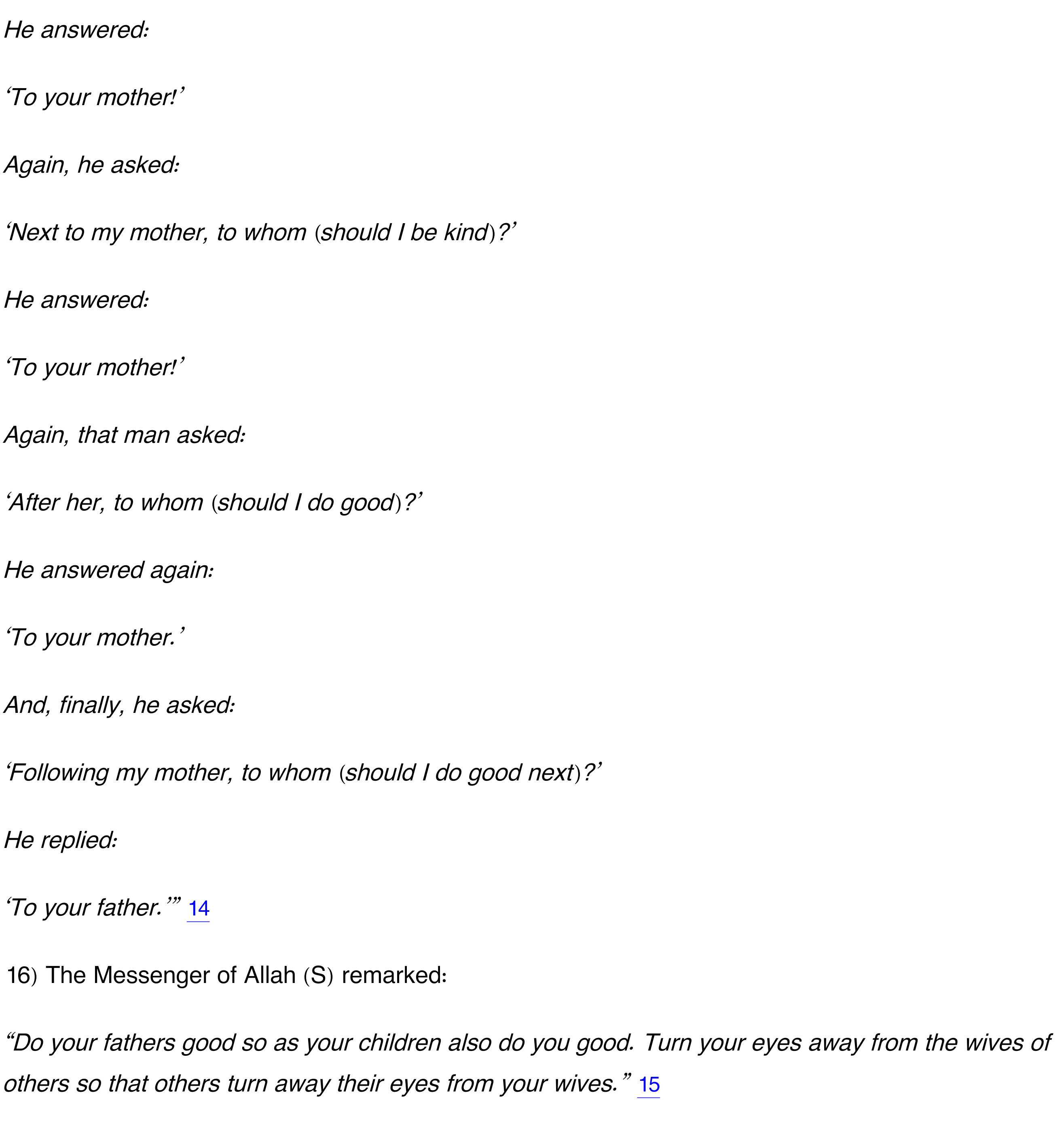
14) The Messenger of Allah (S) remarked:

"He who wishes his life be prolonged and his means of sustenance be made abundant, must treat his parents with kindness and observe the union of kindred." 13

15) Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"A man turned up before the Prophet (S) and asked:

'O' Messenger of Allah! Whom should I do kindness to?'



He answered:

'To your mother!'

Again, he asked:

'Next to my mother, to whom (*should I be kind*)*?'*

He answered:

'To your mother!'

Again, that man asked:

'After her, to whom (*should I do good*)*?'*

He answered again:

'To your mother.'

And, finally, he asked:

'Following my mother, to whom (*should I do good next*)*?'*

He replied:

'To your father.'" [14]

16) The Messenger of Allah (S) remarked:

"Do your fathers good so as your children also do you good. Turn your eyes away from the wives of others so that others turn away their eyes from your wives." [15]

One must keep in mind the fact that one's parents are not regarded as only parents. In some quotations the blissful Prophet (S) and Amir-ul-mu'mineen (as) are considered as the '*fathers of nation*'. The Prophet (S) said:

"Ali and I are the fathers of this Ummat."

In conclusion, once the parents focus their attention on the fact that they stand in importance next to the principle of monotheism of Islam, they will be motivated strongly to call their children to adopt monotheism and Islam still further.

Surah Isra' – Verse 26

وَءَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَي حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلاَ تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيراً

26. "And give to the near of kin his due, and (to) the needy, and the wayfarer; and do not squander wastefully."

In this noble verse, the Qur'an explains still further another chapter from the interrelated fundamental principles of Islam regarding the rights of relatives and the needy as well as the wayfarer and, generally speaking, the issue of spending one's wealth, without immoderation and extravagance.

At first, the verse says:

"And give to the near of kin his due..."

This holy phrase signifies broadly and covers all of one's relatives, though the 'Ahl-ul-Bayt' of the holy Prophet (S) are the most clear examples of it, and the Prophet himself (S) is being clearly and straightly addressed in this verse.

Moreover, the verse continues saying:

"...and (to) the needy, and the wayfarer; and do not squander wastefully."

In the meantime, the Qur'an recommends all not to engage in wasting or spoiling and do not exceed the limits, giving them away more than what they merit.

Concerning the issue of immoderation and extravagance and concentration on this matter is so highly recommended that we read in quotations: The prophet (S) was walking once on a road. One of his companions called Sa'd was engaged in performing the ritual ablution for praying, and he was using a lot of water.

He (S) asked:

"Why is it that you are wasting so such water, O' Sa'd?"

He said:

"Is there any immoderation in the water of ablution?"

He replied:

"Yes. Even once you find yourself by a flowing stream."

Explanations

The Arabic term /tab�ir/ which is derived from /ba�r/ signifies ‘squandering’, like preparing 10 meals for two guests. In other words, that means spreading one’s wealth all over by means of wasting it.

Imam Sadiq (as) has stated:

“He who consumes something in ways other than the path of obedience of Allah, is a ‘squanderer’.” 16

Answering a query concerning the issue of spending in allowed cases, he has ascertained

“Yes, for, he who overspends in almsgiving and gives away out of his wealth, leaving nothing for himself, he has extravagated in using lawful properly.” 17

After the revelation of this verse, the blissful Prophet (S) was searching for the aim of Allah by the phrase /�il qurba/ (near of kin) when Allah revealed to him to give ‘Fadak’ to Fatimah (as) and he did accordingly.

However, later Fadak was illegitimately taken back from the Ahl-ul-Bayt, who tended to document their claim by this verse. Therefore, by the relatives, the objective of /�awil qurba/ (near of kin) are: Ali, Fatimah, Hassan and Hossayn (as).

The Shi‘ite commentators as well as Sunni commentators like Tabari, deducing from the quotations, write:

“When arriving at Sham along with other prisoners, Imam Sajjad (as) for demonstrating to their capturers as to why they considered the Ahl-ul-Bayt as aliens and non-Muslims, documented his speech with this verse, saying: “/�awil qurba/ (relatives) which is mentioned in this verse, directly refers to us and are intended for demonstrating our case.” 18

Some quotations consider this verse as relating to ‘khums’ (one-fifth), while some others regard the verse as speaking of matters higher than material issues. They have said that this verse commands the Prophet (S) to pay what is due to Ali-Ibn-’Abi-Talib by appointing him as his successor in his will.

Imam Sadiq (as) has mentioned with respect to this verse:

“The right of Ali-Ibn-Abi-Talib (as) which has been due to him, has been succession to the Messenger of Allah (S) and having the prophetic sciences.” 19

The objective in mind when mentioning the term /tab�ir/ in the verse, which has been cited and which prohibits Muslims from engaging themselves in is /quluww/ (exaggerations). 20

Fadak was a large farm which was placed at the disposal of the Prophet (S) without any fighting.

That the Prophet in turn left it at the disposal of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) for reasons of their popularity, chastity, devotion, trustfulness, and on order to support them economically in the line of propagation and removing the poverty of the Muslim Ummah.

However, after the passing away of the Prophet (S), Abū-Bakr re-occupied it, which was later returned to them by ‘Umar-Ibn-i-Abdul ’Aziz. They again usurped it and it was returned to them during the era of Ma’mūn Abbasi. Once again they got furious.

There is an extensive literature on the discussions about the historical, legal, and political issues involved which is mentioned the commentaries concerning this verse, which we avoid stating them all in here.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 27

إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُوراً

27. “Verily, the squanderers are the brethrens** (**accomplices**) **of the Satans and the Satan was very ungrateful to his Lord.”

This verse provides a firm justification and emphasizes once again the negation of squandering.

It implies that those who engage in over consumption are accomplices to the Satan, for they tend to spoil Allah’s blessings, and ‘the Satan’ was most ungrateful to Allah, for Allah had bestowed upon him an exceptional potentiality intelligence, as well as extraordinary capability, which he utilized for objectives other than what all of them were destined for, that is, he employed all towards seduction of the people.

The verse says:

“Verily, the squanderers are the brethrens** (**accomplices**) **of the Satans and the Satan was very ungrateful to his Lord.”

Incidentally, the term /’ax/ in Arabic often denotes both ‘brother’, as well as one’s ‘companion’, and one’s company, as in the case of /’ixwassafar/ which refers to the person who is constantly engaged in traveling and in the case of /’ixwal karam/ which refers to the person who is ‘generous’.

‘Brotherhood’ is sometimes a hereditary issue which is established as a result of one’s familial relationship and at times it is the consequence of one’s political affiliation. The squanderers are thus, in a sense, the politically affiliated brothers of the Satan, that is, they are those who follow in the track of the Satan and keep his company.

There are frequent references made in the Qur’an to the ‘Satanical temptations’ or his mastership over

individuals. But, the only occasion on which the phrase /'ixw an-uš-šay atin/ has been used is this verse, which means the squanderers are as the 'collaborators' of the Satan, and not under his domination.

As can be seen, one has here not only been overtaken by his temptations, but he has arrived at a stage of collaboration and assistance of the Satan.

The act of 'squander' is mostly used in the sphere of financial matters. However, it might also refer to other blessings such as 'wasting of one's youth', or of his 'life-time' or utilizing of one's thinking, eyes, ears and tongue in incorrect ways, assigning of responsibilities to indecent people, acceptance of responsibilities without having the proper qualifications and over and above one's capacities and limitations, instructing and learning of unessential and useless matters, etc. [21]

Surah Isra' – Verse 28

وَإِمَّا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ابْتِغَآءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِن رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل لَّهُمْ قَوْلاً مَّيْسُوراً

28. "And if you turn away from them seeking mercy from your Lord, which you are hopeful for, then speak unto them a gentle word."

The Qur'an declares that whenever you are unable to do them good because of your lack of means and funds and you are about to ask Allah for help, hoping to get His help so as to assist them in fulfilling their needs, pledge to aid them in a good manner and use soft words as far as you can.

The verse says:

"And if you turn away from them seeking mercy from your Lord, which you are hopeful for, then speak unto them a gentle word."

Therefore, this noble verse deals with adopting a decent approach towards the people. That was why, while waiting for Allah's grace and assistance for providing him with the necessary means and funds, the blissful Prophet (S) would pray for him who might turn to him for help when and if he lacked the means and the fund, saying:

"May Allah provide the means for you and I out of His Grace!" [22]

Fatimah Zahra (as) once asked the Prophet (S) for a maid to help her with her chores. He answered:

"There are four hundred in the mosque who have no food and clothing. Were the case not so, I would appoint a maid servant for you."

He then taught her the 'hymms' known as 'Tasbihy at' which are called as: 'Tasbih at-i-Hadrat-i-Zahra'.

23

The blissful Qur’an contains instructions concerning the ways of talking with people, among them one may name the gentleness, leniency, easiness, firmness, idiomatic and eloquent ways with which one must commence his speaking. The verse 3, TaHa; 44, 4, ‘Isra’; 23, 5, 9, 6, 8, 7, and 63 Nisa confirm the above points.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 29

وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَي عُنُقِكَ وَلاَ تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُوماً مَّحْسُوراً

29. “And do not make your hand to be shackled to your neck nor stretch it to the utmost (limit) of its stretching, so that you should sit down blamed, empty-handed.”

As observing the issue of moderation in everything in life, even in cases of sharing one’s wealth with others, is a prime factor, the Qur’an stresses this matter in this noble verse, saying:

“And do not make your hand to be shackled to your neck…”

This expression provides a delicate allusion to the fact that one must be generous and not be a miser as those who behave in such a way as if their hands are both in chains and tied up to their necks, thus unable to give away anything to anyone.

This verse also recommends all not to be overgenerous and open-handed so as not to be blamed and get stuck with your job.

The verse continues saying:

“…nor stretch it to the utmost (limit) of its stretching, so that you should sit down blamed, empty-handed.”

Imam Sadiq (as) remarked:

“The Qur’anic term /mahs�r/ here is meant envy, poverty, and empty-handedness. Some also claim that ‘blame’ concerns with the beginning of the verse which refers to ‘miserliness’ while the term ‘empty-handed’ alludes to ‘lavishness’ in spending and is related to the end of the verse.”

A woman once sent down her son to the Prophet (S) and asked his shirt for sanctification purposes of blessings. The Prophet (S) gave away his only shirt and as he had no other one to put on, he did not get out of the house for attending his prayers. This holy verse was revealed indicating that generosity does not imply that one gives away his only single shirt.

We have it in another quotation, saying: Some gold was brought and handed down to the Prophet (S) and he gave the whole of it away to the poor instantly. On the following day, a beggar came up to the Prophet (S), asked for something. He had nothing left to give him. The beggar insulted him.

As the Prophet (S) had nothing to give him, was saddened upon which occasion when this verse was revealed. 24

Surah Isra' – Verse 30

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيراً بَصِيراً ﴿30﴾

30. "Verily, your Lord extends the sustenance for whomever He pleases; and straitens (it for whom He pleases), verily He is, of His servants, All-Aware, All-Seeing."

Allah's coffers are plentiful and well expanded, though as a matter of expediency, He sometimes widens the scope for the means of sustenance for some people, while, at other times, He tightens up and makes the means of it meager.

He is truly knowledgeable as to what is good for the servant, and He is all-seeing with regard to their advantage. Hence, while one's scope of sustenance is broadened, another person's sphere is tightened as He deems what is worthy for them.

Therefore, He (s.w.t.) examines some by enabling them to accumulate wealth while He does the same by leaving them in a state of empty-handedness and poverty. It is on the basis of this point that we find Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) state in Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 91, that:

The Almighty has predetermined people's means of sustenance by augmenting in case of some and decreasing in case of others so that He would be please to examine whomever He wants by putting him on trial, thus selecting the rich and the poor by their gratitude and perseverance which they express.

Moreover, a great many people start rebelling against everything as soon as they feel self-sufficient. Thus, they would better stay at a certain level of living which will neither make them stay in a state of dire poverty nor in a state of rebellion.

Concluding these mentioned remarks, one must proclaim that affluence or lack of it, are both characteristics of the Lordship of Allah and are required for the development and training as well as for the testing of human beings.

The verse says:

"Verily, your Lord extends the sustenance for whomever He pleases; and straitens (it for whom

He pleases*), *verily He is, of His servants, All-Aware, All-Seeing."

1. Surah Luqman
2. The current Surah, verse 23
3. Usul-i-Kafi and Tafsir-us-Safi
4. Cited in Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Tafsir-us-Safi
5. Tafsir-i-Majma'-ul-Bayan
6. Tafsir-i-N▯r-uth-Thaqalayn, Usul-i-Kafi, Kanz-ul-'Ummal, Tafsir-us-Safi
7. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 32
8. Ibid, verse 14
9. Mizan-ul-Hikmah, vol. 10
10. Bihar, vol. 74, p. 85
11. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 467
12. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, P. 467
13. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 467
14. Bihar, vol. 74, p. 49
15. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 466
16. Bihar, vol. 75, p.302
17. Tafsir-i-N▯r-uth-Thaqalayn
18. 'Ihtij aj-i-Tabarsi, vol. 2, p.33, Tafsir-i-N▯r-uth-Thaqalayn
19. Kafi, vol. 1, p. 294
20. Tafsir-i-Furqan
21. Tafsir-i-Atyab-ul-Bayan, and Furqan.
22. Tafsir-i-Lahiji
23. Tafsir-i-N▯r-uth- Thaqalayn
24. Tafsir-i-N▯r-uth-Thaqalayn

Section 4: Moral Conduct

Surah Isra' – Verse 31

وَلاَ تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلاَدَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلاَقٍ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئاً كَبِيراً

31. "And do not kill your offspring for fear of poverty. We sustain them as well as you. Verily killing them is a capital sin."

The Arabic term /'iml aq/ signifies poverty and empty-handedness. The provision of the means of sustenance is of the power of Allah and the greatness in quantity and number of population is irrelevant. Therefore, having a larger number of offspring is not a factor in a family's poverty.

Following the former various sections of the Islamic commandments which were discussed in the

previous sections, the Holy Qur'an deals in here with an other part of these commandments and explains six important commandments within five verses in concise, meaningful, and interesting statements.

At first, He alludes to one of the viscous practices of the 'Age of Ignorance' which was among the most heinous of the crimes, saying:

"And do not kill your offspring for fear of poverty..."

It is not you who provide them with nourishment; it is We Who provide them as well as you with means of sustenance. Killing them is and has been a capital sin.

The verse says:

"...We sustain them as well as you. Verily killing them is a capital sin."

This verse provides us with clues regarding the economic situation of the Arabs of the Age of Ignorance which has been so gruesome that they used to kill their dear offspring whether boys or girls for fear of lack of financial resources, hence getting rid of them.

This case of crimes, of course, is obviously presented to us in another form during our times and in our so-called most progressive types of societies. It shows itself in the form of getting rid of pregnancies in a most widespread form for the sake of preventing over population and avoiding economic insufficiencies.

To conclude this statement, we must note that a child is entitled to live and parents cannot take away this right from him. Sometimes, it so happens that our very means of sustenance depends on our children's means of sustenance, therefore, killing one's own child and terminating one's pregnancy (aborting) are both capital sins and an offence of immense proportions.

Surah Isra' – Verse 32

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَي إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَآءَ سَبِيلاً

32. "And do not approach fornication, verily it is an indecency and an evil way."

Illegitimate sexual relationship (fornication) paves the way for numerous individual, social, and familial corruptions which follow the act and, therefore, it is forbidden in Islam, and in the Qur'an it has been mentioned alongside such capital sins as paganism, murder, and theft.

It is for this very reason that this noble verse refers to fornication as an indecent behaviour and recommends not to approach the act of fornication which is a heinous act and an evil way." It does not state:

“Do not fornicate”

but it says:

“Do not approach fornication.”

Here is a delicate allusion made to the fact that involvement in the heinous act of fornication usually requires certain pre-requisites which predispose one for the act in a gradual manner.

The verse says:

“And do not approach fornication, verily it is an indecency and an evil way.”

The act of ‘voyeurism’ is one of such pre-requisites. ‘Nudity’ and ‘unveiling’ of oneself are other steps preceding the act. The prevalence of counter-didactic books, misleading films, corruption-inciting publications and also centers for corruption, are all serving as the preliminary steps for such an act.

Moreover, associating of men and women in private, that is, of those who are not bound to be together by lawful marriage is another factor leading to the act of fornication.

And finally, distancing of the young from marriage as well as imposing of severe unreasonable demands by the two sides in connection with marriage both provide the grounds for ‘approximation to fornication’, which has been dissuaded in a concise sentence in the above verse. In Islamic quotations, each also has separately been dissuaded.

In the meantime, other issues which are at stake in fornication consist of absence of commitment and duty with regard to the survival of generations, lack of education for the children, and absence of fatherly love and motherly affection for the child, which totally disappear.

Fornication also wipes out and disrupts the foundations of the laws of inheritance, the consequences of which make it impossible to locate the true inheritors.

The Philosophy Underlying the Prohibition of Fornication

1) The emergence of anarchy in the family institution and the disappearance of the relationships of parents and children are the consequences of fornication the lack of which leads to the cognition of the society and also serve as a backbone for the full protection of children.

In the society where there is an increase in the number of illegitimate children and of single mothers, the social relationship, which is based upon family relationship, will seriously be stumbling and, finally, disrupted.

Moreover the society will be further deprived of the element of affection which is the determining factor in controlling the crimes and atrocities, and the human society will be fully turned into an animal type of

gathering which is constantly coupled with all types of atrocities.

2) Experience reveals and science has also proven the fact that such an act leads to the spread of all kinds of infections. Despite all organizations which have been established for combating the consequences of the impact of this act today, the statistics again indicate to what extent individuals have suffered in losing their happiness thereby.

3) One must not overlook the fact that the goal in marriage is not solely the gratification of one's sexual instinct.

On the contrary, participation in family life and one's spiritual association as well as one's peace of mind along with the education of children and cooperation in all spheres of life constitute all-in-all the end-result of marriage, which all are impossible to bring about without the union in marriage of men and women and along with the prohibition of 'fornication'.

4) Fornication provides the basis for numerous kinds of entanglements, suicides, escaping from family life and homes, the rise of fatherless illegitimate children, infections diseases, and anxiety for respectable families.

5) Fornication has been regarded as a heinous, and indecent act throughout history and has also been prohibited in other religions as well.

Islam has been quick to present preventive measures against heinous act of fornication, among which one may name the following:

1) Prohibition of association of men with unallowed women in some private places.

2) Prohibition of private relationship of a man with an unallowed woman.

3) Prohibition of women's wearing make-up for unallowed men or in their presence.

4) Prohibition of looking of unallowed women and men at each other, and abstention from thinking of fornication, or of watching seducing photographs.

5) One must not only avoid the act of fornication but he must also abstain from the acts which precede fornication. Sometimes, a look, a telephone call, a letter or a contact may pave the way for illegitimate relationships.

6) Severe punishments issued for those who engage in fornication.

7) Recommendation for marriage and lowering of the level of 'dower' at the time of marriage.

8) Blaming of the act of marriage which has long been overdue.

9) Sanctification of the institution of marriage, and struggling for having a family life.

In conclusion, Imam-Ali-Ibn-i-Abi-Talib (as) has been quoted who has said:

"I heard from the blissful Prophet who stated: 'There are six negative impacts in the act of fornication, three of which belong to this world and the other three belong to the Hereafter.

As for those which exist in this world are the fact that it removes sincerity and illumination from one's life, cuts off one's means of sustenance, and accelerates human beings process of extermination.

The three (negative) effects which come about in the Hereafter are: The Wrath of the Almighty, severity in the settlement of one's account and the initiation into the Fire of Hell'." [1]

Surah Isra' – Verse 33

وَلاَ تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وَمَن قُتِلَ مُظْلُوماً فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهِ سُلْطَاناً فَلا يُسْرِف فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنصُوراً

33. "And do not kill any one whom Allah has forbidden, save for just cause, and whoever is killed unjustly We have appointed to his heir authority (to demand blood compensation or retaliation), thus he must not exceed limits in slaying; verily he is (justly) assisted (by Allah)."

To protect the oppressed is one of Allah's ways of treatment. The issue dealt with in this verse is respect for human blood and the utter prohibition of 'murder'.

He says:

"And do not kill any one whom Allah has forbidden, save for just cause..."

Not only murder is punishable from the point of view of Islam but also the slightest harm done to a human being is punishable as well, and one can proclaim that this viewpoint of Islam in protecting and respecting human beings' blood, soul and prestige is unequalled and unsurpassed in other religions.

There are, of course, certain cases where respect for human blood is missing as in cases of those who have committed murders or parallel crimes. Therefore, He makes an exception to the rule by the phrase 'save for just cause'.

Certainly, respect for human blood is not only a matter exclusive to the Muslims as a category. On the contrary, non-Muslims who are not at war with Muslims and they are coexisting with the Muslims in a peaceful manner, are also being covered by this rule. Their life, wealth and wives are thus protected and any violation of their rights in this respect is prohibited.

Then the Holy Qur'an alludes to the right of retaliation which has been accorded to the heirs of the shed blood, saying:

"...and whoever is killed unjustly We have appointed to his heir authority (to demand blood compensation or retaliation)..."

However, such a person must not exceed beyond the limits of his rights, and overdo in retaliation for the murder, for he is fully supported.

The verse continues saying:

"...thus he must not exceed limits in slaying; verily he is (justly) assisted (by Allah)."

Certainly, the heirs of the murdered are supported by Allah as long as they observe Islamic limits and do not exceed those codes.

This sentence makes allusion to the ways of the behaviour which were prevalent during the Age of Ignorance and, nowadays also sometimes takes place in case some innocent victims are being probably murdered who are defenseless in retaliation for the killing of one single person and in addition to the killing of the murderer himself.

Explanations

The Qur'anic sentence:

'Thus he must not exceed limits in slaying'

signifies that when the issue of retaliation is involved, do not kill other than the murderer and do not amputate him which has a common practice during the 'Age of Ignorance'.

Murder and killing is among the capital sins. He who kills any one in cases other than those of retaliation or of causes of corruption, seems to have killed all the people.

"...whoever slays a human being for other than man slaughter or mischief in the earth, it is as he had slain mankind as a whole..."[2]

The punishment for such a murder is suffering eternal pains of the hell.

"And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell wherein shall he abide forever..."[3]

Such a punishment holds constant for the person who uses arms and threatens to kill and is known as inciting corruption, and as waging war against Allah.

In quotations, we have it that one of the examples of the heir of the blood is Hadrat-i-Mahdi (a.j.) who

will take his vengeance of his grandfather Imam Hussayn (as)

“We have appointed to his heir authority (to demand blood compensation or retaliation).[4]*”*

As a preventive measure the Divine support of the oppressed and the according of the right of one’s heir to retaliation and the consignment of such a right to the heir are noteworthy. It is also a preventive measure for preventing over retaliation.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 34

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلاَّ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّي يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْؤولاً

34. “And do not approach the property of the orphan except in the best manner (to his advantage); until he reaches his maturity, and keep the promise, verily every promise will be questioned about.”

The Arabic term /’ašudd/ refers to a tightly knit knot, and it refers in here to the stage of the development of an orphan when he is physically and spiritually in a firm position to defend his properties and belongings.

The blissful Qur’an has made frequent recommendations about the protection of the orphan’s rights and considerations with regard to his state and overall care for their affairs.

However, as there is the possibility of stumbling in financial matters and misuse of belongings and properties of the orphans, then more warnings are required in which case even approaching them has been forbidden, and any oppressive intrusion into them has been equated with swallowing of Fire.

Thus, He has dealt with this issue in this verse, addressing all in a tone of voice similar to the one used in case of unchaste act, the verse says:

“And do not approach the property of the orphan...”

The Qur’an declares that all must not only abstain from using orphans’ belongings and properties, but they must also respect quietly its sanctuary.

However, as such a decree might be used as a pretext by certain individuals lacking insight who always take into account the negative aspect of things, thus causing the properties and belongings of the orphans to be neglected and spoiled, and be left at the mercy of the circumstances, then the Qur’an immediately makes a clear exception to this rule and stresses by saying:

“...except in the best manner (to his advantage)...”

Therefore, every type of intrusion into the wealth of the orphans, which is fulfilled targeted at the protection, betterment, multiplication and increase in the wealth, is allowed.

It is obvious that such a situation will continue as long as the orphan reaches the stage of mental and economic maturity where the Qur'an makes mention of following its discussion concerning the issue in the question, saying:

"...until he reaches his maturity..."

In the meantime, when this verse was revealed, Muslims abstained from attending the meals served by orphans and kept them in isolation. Then another verse was revealed the aim of which was not condemnation of approaching the orphans.

On the contrary, it confirmed the fact that the righteous must not abandon the orphans under the pretext of observing their devotion and of being virtuous. The verse went on saying that if such people mixed their lives with theirs it did not meet with any obstacle, reaffirming the fact that they were their religious brethren and thus they had to treat them in a brotherly way.

Allah differentiates those who incite corruption from those who are righteous. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 220 says:

"...and if you become co-partner with them, they are your brethren..."

It is for this reason that in a tradition the blissful Prophet (S) said:

"Whoever takes three orphans under his protection is like the person who has spent a life-time in prayers at night, has continued on fasting all days and has continued waging a holy war with his unshielded sword for Allah and he and I would be just two brothers in Paradise like these two fingers." [5]

And again, Amir-ul-Mu'mineen-Ali (as), at the time of his death, said in his will:

"Appealing to you in Allah's name again and again, concerning the issue of the orphans, lest they should feel hungry on and off, and lest they should die for your not attending to them."[6]

We have him again saying:

"Be kind towards the orphans; treat the beggars in a gentle way and get along well with them, and, finally, be kind and compassionate with the weak."

In another tradition he has said:

"The best way of being good is showing kindness towards the orphans." [7]

In 'Nahj-ul-Balaqah, letter 47, he (as) has commended further taking into consideration of the rights of

those who are hired to do a job, the farmers, women, and the orphans.

Then, discussing the issue of keeping one's promise in this verse, the verse states:

"...and keep the promise, verily every promise will be questioned about."

It is so owing to the fact that most of the social relationships and the channels of economic system as well as political issues all revolve around the axis of pledges and promises. If and when there is a stumbling block found in them, the social system will instantly collapse.

Therefore, We must stick to our words, keeping them whatever they might be and with whomever they might be.

In the meantime, some Islamic traditions denote that one of the examples of pledges and promises which are in question, is compassion affection, and obedience with respect to Ali (as). 8

Surah Isra' – Verse 35

وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلاً

35. "And give the full measure when you measure out and weigh you with the right balance, that is good and better in the end."

The Arabic term /qist as/ is made up of two words: /qist/, which signifies justice, and /t as/ which means the pan of a balance. 9

Some Islamic traditions denote: The Immaculate Imam (as) is an example and a paradigm of /qist as ul mustaqim/ (right balance) in Islam. 10

The issues relating to the people's transactions and respect for other people's rights are so important that the Qur'an has frequently stressed it and the lengthiest verse of the Qur'an, that is, 'verse 282 of Surah Al-Baqarah' concerns this matter, and Surah Al-Mutaffifin, (the Defrauders), has been named as such to exhibit the importance of the decent ways of carrying out transactions.

The first invitation of some prophets, like Shu'ayb, was to abandon short weight.11

Therefore, the Muslim markets must severely be free from fraudulent activities, and defrauding, and the salesperson must be trustworthy, accurate, honest, and keep accurate accounts of everything.

The verse says:

"And give the full measure when you measure out and weigh you with the right balance..."

Measuring in full with the right kind of balance are both examples of the sticking to one's pledges, which was discussed in the previous verse, because transactions are forms of one's commitments.

Balances and measuring devices as well as commercial calculation instruments must be accurate and intact. Accuracy in balances, weighing and calculations are sources of good and blessings, and defrauding will tighten the sphere of one's blessings.

The consequences of right transactions and respect for the rights of people produce dividends for the person involved, for they create a confidence-building environment among people, while defrauding and inaccuracies in balancing and calculating lead to financial corruptions and make all lose confidence. Thus, a happy ending requires honesty.

In principle, justice, regulations, and accuracy are vital principles in all spheres of life. It is a principle which governs all the universe. All kinds of deviation from this principle are dangerous and lead to evil endings, especially; defrauding disrupts and wipes out confidence, which is essential in transactions, thus leading the economic system to collapse.

The verse concludes:

"...that is good and better in the end."

Surah Isra' – Verse 36

وَلاَ تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ كُلُّ أُوْلَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْؤُولاً

36. "And do not follow that of which you have not knowledge; verily the hearing and the sight and the heart, all these will be questioned about it."

The mention of eyes, ears and heart in this verse is perhaps used as examples, for in the day of resurrection, besides man himself, one's organs such as his hands, feet, and other bodily organs will be questioned, too, in which case they will burst out speaking and make confessions.

Throughout history, most of the rebellions, and quarrels, have been the consequences of hastily set-up trial procedures and judgments, undocumented words, and views which have not been backed up by research.

Putting into practice the content of this verse will provide protection for the individuals as well as the society against all fraudulent activities and erroneous behaviors, for undue optimism, simple-mindedness in believing others, and accepting rumors turn the society into a chaotic state and submissive towards the enemy.

Blind obedience, pursuance of habits and hallucinations, following the order of one's ancestors, acceptance of the baseless foretellings, and dreams, conjectures, surmises, judgments which are unfounded, bearing testimonies without knowledge, taking sides, appraisal or criticism without prior knowledge, baseless interpretation and analysis, issuing verdicts without knowledge, quoting of groundless rumors, ascribing something wrong to Allah, and religion without authorization, decision-making in cases of emotional tensions and crisis, relying on swearing and crocodile tears of others without due reasons, all are examples of the sentence and are absolutely forbidden, where it says:

"And do not follow that of which you have not knowledge..."

In accordance with the circumstances of sequential and credible quotations, following knowledge implies the pursuing of decisive, religious principles such as the verdicts of a 'Mujtahid' or that type of knowledge which is acquired with reassurances which approach the level of certainty.

It is just like the case in which people gain knowledge about their illness and rely on the prescription of a compassionate physician who is a specialist, just in the same way one tends to have access to Allah's commandments by inquiring about the verdict of an all-embracing devout 'Mujtahid'.

Therefore, this stage of awareness will be enough for the moment though there is a hierarchy for knowledge which comprises other deeper categories, namely: 'Ilm-ul-Yaqin' meaning knowledge with certainty, 'Ayn-ul-Yaqin' which signifies knowledge which is equated with certainty in itself or intuition, and 'Haq-ul-Yaqin' meaning knowledge which is identical with the truth.

In conclusion, the Immaculate Imams (as) used to make their companions abstain from listening to and saying of different kinds of vain words, recommending them to guard of themselves against letting everything enter their hearts and ears. They used to allude to this noble verse in connection with this matter.

As Imam Sadiq (as) recited this verse when instructing the person who would stay over time when using the toilette so as to be able to listen to the music and songs of his neighbour, He said:

"Ears, eyes, and hearts will be questioned for having listened, having seen, and for having kept memories."

Imam Sajjad (as) also stated:

"Man is not entitled to say what he wants."[12]

Therefore, one's life must be based on correct knowledge and information as well as logic and insight. We must not spread rumors making a fuss about them and damage the prestige of the innocent individuals and violate their rights.

The blissful Qur'an disrupts the entire population of the sorcerers, magicians, and fortune-tellers who

used to assemble simple-minded individuals around themselves.

One's faith in the Reckoning Day and clearing of accounts provides the basis for his being of virtuous; and one is also going to be questioned with regard to his hidden intentions in the Resurrection Day.

Surah Isra' – Verse 37

وَلاَ تَمْشِ فِي الاَرْضِ مَرَحاً إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ الاَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولاً

37. "And do not walk around exultantly on the earth; certainly you will never rend the earth; nor attain the mountains in height."

Islam does not only provide rules and regulations for ideological, political, military and economic issues, but it also offers commandments with regard to such minor matters such as going and coming to the house as well, owing to its encompassing and all-inclusiveness inherent in it.

Thus, it launches a campaign in this noble verse against arrogance and, while clearly dissuading the believers, it addresses the Prophet (S) saying:

"And do not walk around exultantly on the earth; certainly you will never rend the earth; nor attain the mountains in height."

Here, in this holy verse, there is an explicit allusion made to those proud and arrogant people who take their steps with pride, pounding them on the ground so as to make people aware of their comings and goings, and stay with their necks up so as, base on their imagination, to prove their superiority to others.

The objective of the Qur'an is to denounce arrogance in all its forms in general; not only in its apparent aspects as i.e. in the case of walking which is a particular aspect of it, but also in all of its aspects, for arrogance is the source of all kinds of alienation from Allah, from oneself, as well as errors in one's judgment, losing of one's way in his truth-seeking effort, joining the ranks of the Satan, and pollution with all kinds of sin.

The practical program offered by the pioneers of Islam can serve as the most instructive paradigm for each and every true Muslim in this regard.

We have it in the biography of the Prophet (S) that he would never allow others to walk while he was riding on the back of a horse. We also have it that the Prophet (S) used to squat on the earth and he used to have a simple meal just like that of the slaves; he also used to milk the sheep, and used to ride on the back of a donkey with no saddles.

We also have it in the biography of Hadrat-Ali (as) that he used to carry over water for the house and he

used to sweep the house occasionally.

We have it in the biography of Imam Mujtab a (as) that in spite of having and owning numerous animals for riding, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca twenty times on foot, saying:

"I practice this way out of sheer modesty for the Lord's sake."

Surah Isra' – Verse 38

كُلُّ ذَلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهاً

38. "All of that, the sin of it, is hateful in the sight of your Lord."

This noble verse re-emphasizes all of the afore mentioned divine commandments regarding the prohibition of paganism, homicide, adultery, the killing of one's own offspring, usurping of the orphan's belongings and property, and harming of one's parents and the like. It proclaims: The sins committed with respect to all of these are abominable before Allah.

The verse says:

"All of that, the sin of it, is hateful in the sight of your Lord."

One can deduce from this meaning that, contrary to the opinion of the followers of the school of determinism, the Lord has never decided that one should commit sin, for had He determined such a thing, it would have been incompatible with the hatred and inconvenience which is stressed in this verse.

In other words, one infers from this verse that the ideas of the fatalists are wrong, for, according to this verse, the Lord despises the evils and the wrong-doings of the people and, once He shuns such acts, how would He, then, compel people to commit these acts.

Obviously, one issue cannot be, at the same time, both considered as decent and indecent simultaneously by the Lord. It becomes, in the meantime, transparent that the term /makrūh/ 'abominable' in the Qur'anic literature is also applied in the case of the greatest of one's sins.

In conclusion, we must note that the evil character of one's deeds is a constant matter in all of the Divine religions, and man's inherent characteristics tend to leave their impacts on his own behaviour.

Surah Isra' – Verse 39

ذَلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَى إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهاً ءَاخَرَ فَتُلْقَى فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُوماً مَّدْحُوراً

39. “That** (**commandment**) **is of the wisdom** (**that**) **your Lord has revealed to you, and do not associate with Allah any other god for you will be thrown into the Hell, blamed, cast away.”

Some commentators of the Holy Qur’an are of the opinion that by ‘of the wisdom’ in here is meant those constant commandments which have been mentioned in the previous verses and which have been outstanding in other Divine religions as well and it will never be abrogated.

In holy verse No. 22, the first among the wise sayings, was prohibition of paganism, and, the discussion of paganism in this verse, concludes all wise sayings, too.

To stress once again the point that such wise commandments are all having their origin in Divine revelation, the holy Qur’an says:

“That** (**commandment**) **is of the wisdom** (**that**) **your Lord has revealed to you…”

Allusion as to the fact that the commandments have been both proven through rational philosophy as well as through the method of the Divine revelation, and the principles underlying all of the Divine commandments have common grounds though one can not recognize their details under the weak light of the intellect itself, has been here made.

It is only through the power of revelation which one can obtain an understanding of such issues.

As was the case with the beginning of these commandments which concerned the prohibition of paganism, He concludes them with the same issue, implying that you shall never associate any other god with ‘Allah’ and should not place any other god for the purpose of worshipping alongside the Lord, ‘Allah’, for you will be thrown down into Hell, blamed and outcast from the Lord.

The verse says:

“…and do not associate with Allah any other god for you will be thrown into the Hell, blamed, cast away.”

In fact, paganism and dualism in some matters of worship provide the basic substance for deviations, crimes, and sins. Therefore, these chains of fundamental commandments in Islam began with paganism and ended with it, too.

Incidentally, sometimes, the Lord, addressing His Prophet, in an adamant manner, in fact issues warnings to the pagans to abandon hope in the Prophet (S), who are targeted in actual fact.

Explanations

Intellect and innate disposition do not make man free from the need in revelation. On the contrary, man is in need of revelation.

All schools of thought and methods, other than the school of revelation and the Divine laws, are out of the question and lead man astray, the following of which would lead one to total deprivation, blaming, and the opening of one's way to the 'inferno'.

Surah Isra' – Verse 40

أَفَأَصْفَاكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلآئِكَةِ إِنَاثاً إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُوْلُونَ قَوْلاً عَظِيماً

40. "Has your Lord then distinguished you by giving you sons, and has taken daughters** (**for Himself**) **from among the angels? Verily, you are uttering a grievous saying.

From among the deviant ideas which pagans held, there was one concerning the fact that they claimed angels to be the daughters of Allah, and the Qur'an has repeatedly dealt with this matter, regarding it to be a great lie and a false accusation.

The following verses may then be referred to as examples:

"Or has He daughters while you have sons?"[13]

"What! For you the males and for Him the females!"[14]

The first verse means:

"Are there daughters for Him and sons for you?"

The second one means:

"Are there sons for you and daughters for Him?"

Certainly, the belief regarding Allah's having offspring, has long been held both by the Jews and by the Christians. However, the belief held in Allah's having daughters, has been exclusive to the idol–worshippers.

Therefore, this noble verse makes allusion to one of the superstitious beliefs of the pagans, thus making transparent the logical basis of their thinking by this means. Many of them used to hold the view that angels were daughters of Allah, they were shameful of even listening to or hearing the word 'girl' and felt uneasy and unfortunate for having a daughter born to their household.

Documenting its claims by their own logic, the Qur'an affirms:

"Has your Lord then distinguished you by giving you sons, and has taken daughters** (**for Himself**) **from among the angels?..."

Undoubtedly, daughters just in the same way as sons are surely both from among the Divine blessings and there is no difference between them in value from humankind point of view.

However, the Holy Qur'an seeks to condemn them with their own logic, questioning them as to how ignorant they are by attributing to their Lord what they would themselves be ashamed of having in their own possession.

Later, at the end of the holy verse, as a decisive verdict, the Qur'an declares:

"...Verily, you are uttering a grievous saying."

This is a statement which is incompatible with all kinds of logical reasoning and it is without solid foundations on several grounds, for:

1) Your belief in Him having a child is a grave insult to His sanctuary, because He is neither composed of matter; nor does He require any physical provisions; nor does He require the survival of His generation.

2) Why is it that you regard all of Allah's children as being daughters while you consider girls as having the lowest possible status?

3) Moreover, this belief is also regarded as an insult to the status of the Divine angels who are the followers of the truth and the near-stationed of His presence. You get furious upon hearing the name 'girls' while you regard girls as close associates of the Divine domain.

1. Man-la Yahduruhul Faqih, Khis al, Safi, Majma'-ul-Bayan
2. Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 32
3. Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 93
4. Tafsir-i-Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn
5. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 15, p. 178
6. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 15, p. 177
7. Ghurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 6
8. Bihar, vol. 24, p. 187
9. Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan
10. Bihar, vol. 24, p. 187
11. Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, verses 181-183
12. Tafsir-i-Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn
13. Surah Al-Tūr, No. 52, verse 39
14. Surah An-Najm, No. 53, verse 21

Section 5: Everything in the Heavens and in the Earth Glorifies Allah

Surah Isra' – Verse 41

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْءَانِ لَيَذَّكَّرُوا وَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلاَّ نُفُوراً

41. "And certainly We have explained** (**the facts in various ways**) **in this Qur'an so that they may receive admonition, but it does not add to them save aversion."

The Qur'anic phrase /sarrafn a/ (We have explained) refers to the varied explanation and different reiterations of it for the clarification of the issue in question.

Man is searching for variations by nature; whether in the natural sphere or in the domain of the Divine Book and, hence, this is the secret of some repetitions and variations of the statements in the Qur'an.

As raining over an infected corpse produces foul odour and a stinking smell, the introduction of the Divine verses into the realm of the arrogant and some obstinate people who are so habituated, leads to their further detestation.

Therefore, the holy verse implies that Allah has thus far reiterated His proofs in the noble Qur'an, citing in detail, their significance and proverbial sayings and whatever else has been instructive and wise so that they can contemplate and make sure of their truthfulness.

The verse says:

"And certainly We have explained** (**the facts in various ways**) **in this Qur'an so that they may receive admonition..."

However, those pagans do not benefit from these instructive matters and they always add up to their abomination and hatred unto the truth.

The verse says:

"...but it does not add to them save aversion."

One can, in the meantime, draw up this conclusion with regard to educational objectives that there is not necessarily a limited number of ways to gain the better educational aims.

On the contrary, there exist various means and methods which can be utilized, for there are individuals differences in interests and in abilities which must be taken into account and one must infiltrate in a different manner in each of the cases.

This point is also one of the methods of eloquence employed in expression.

Surah Isra' – Verse 42

قُل لَّوْ كَانَ مَعَهُ ءَالِهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذاً لاَّبْتَغَوْا إِلَي ذِي الْعَرْشِ سَبِيلاً

42. "Say: 'If there were** (**other**) **gods with Him as they** (**the pagans**) **claim, then, they would certainly have sought a way unto the Lord of the 'Arsh."

The pagans believed in the Lord and regarded 'Allah' as the creator of the world of existence.

Nevertheless, they used to consider the icons as their intercessors or as the Lord's partners. This verse refutes the existence of such a relationship between the Lord and the icons, for the idols can neither grasp the power from the hands of the great Almighty; nor can they find the means for their own reinforcement.

The hierarchy of the system of creation proves best the monotheistic nature of Allah. Were there other gods besides the Almighty, that would certainly require competition, in which case, there would necessarily be disruptions appearing in the entire system.

Therefore, this noble verse alludes to one of the evidences for monotheism, which, in the context of literature of the scientists and the philosophers, has been referred to as 'the mutual hindrance proof'.

This means that type of the anarchical world run by 'dualism' the nature of which requires the existence of various gods, centered around all kinds of disruptions[1].

It is for this reason that the Qur'an addresses the Prophet (S) to tell them that if there were other gods alongside the Almighty, as they claim, then these gods would certainly try to seek their way through to the great Lord of the heavens and thus dominate Him, for it is natural that every powerful person wishes to add up to his power, extending his sphere of influence further.

If there were other gods, truly speaking, such a kind of struggle and incompatibility over the extension of their power would result in anarchy and disruptions in all spheres of life.

The verse says:

"Say: 'If there were** (**other**) **gods with Him as they** (**the pagans**) **claim, then, they would certainly have sought a way unto the Lord of the 'Arsh."

Surah Isra' – Verse 43

سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَي عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ عُلُوّاً كَبِيراً

43. "Glory be to Him and Exalted is He far above from what they say! He is High, the Great."

And, now, the Lord differentiates Himself and distances Himself from having got partners. The Qur'an implies that the Almighty is so far superior to what they say and excels in everything for which no limits can be set.

The verse says:

"Glory be to Him and Exalted is He far above from what they say! He is High, the Great."

The objective in mentioning superiority in this connection, is excellence in the Lord's attributes which are unmatched by any means and unequalled for any one else, because none is more omnipotent and omniscient than Him. In other words, the Lord is far superior and pure to what they claim.

Surah Isra' – Verse 44

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالاَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ وَإِن مِن شَيْءٍ إِلاَّ يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِن لاَّ تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيماً غَفُوراً

44. "The seven heavens and the earth, and every being therein, celebrate His glory, and there is not single thing but glorifies Him with His Praise, but you do not understand their glorification; verily He is Forbearing, Forgiving."

This noble verse proclaims that all the cosmic order has its own way of glorification, prostration, and individual prayer for the Lord (s.w.t.). Some commentators claim that this type of glorification is of a genetic kind.

That is, the structural part of the existence of every particle in the world, is a sign and a symbol of the Lord's Will, Wisdom, Knowledge, and of His Justice.

Others are of the opinion that the world of existence has its own kind of consciousness and knowledge, and all are glorifying at all times though our ears are incapable of hearing their voice. This latter view is more consonant with the apparent form of the verses. Vocalization of the things is not impossibility, for such a process will actualize in the Hereafter.

"...they shall say: 'Allah', Who makes everything speak, has made us speak..."[2]

Even stones have got and possess sensibilities and feel frightened, and, for fear of the Lord, they fall down from the mountains.

"...and others tumble down through fear of Allah..."[3]

Solomon (as) could understand the medium of expression used by ants and was in full command of the expression symbols used by birds. A kind of bird called 'Hud Hud' used to inspect and recognize the deviation shown by some people and came to report it to Solomon.

The Lord, in many cases of the revelations, used to address the mountains.

For example, He tells them to pray along with Dawūd, saying:

"...O' mountains! Sing praises with him..."[4]

There are frequent allusions made to the glorification by all beings, besides the above cases, in the Qur'an.

We also have it in quotations that bees glorify Allah. [5]

A small pebble which was in the hands of the Prophet (S), testified as to the legitimacy of the Prophet's mission (S). [6]

The shrill voices of the birds are their way of glorification of Allah[7].

All the above Islamic quotations refer to the real cases of glorification and they do not include their non–verbal language.

A Persian poetry says:

"Every one is using one way for You glorification and thankfulness to You. A nightingale goes on twittering sonnets while 'qomri' sings common songs."

"The entire particles of the world are addressing You during day and night and in private."

"They say: We are all–eyes all–ears, and all well–aware though we remain voiceless when we are with you."

Later, to prove the magnitude of the position of the Lord and that it is aside from the imagination of the pagans, the Qur'an refers to the glorification of the beings of the world in the presence of His Sacred Essence, when it says:

"The seven heavens and the earth, and every being therein, celebrate His glory, and there is not single thing but glorifies Him with His Praise..."

The profoundly deep universe of such magnitude with its amazing system and with all those secrets along with its breath-taking art all glorify and thank Him.

Nevertheless, He is forbearing and forgiving, at the same time, and you will not be immediately interrogated and questioned for your paganism and disbelief. Contrarily, He will provide you with an adequate respite while He will be leaving the gates of repentance open to you so as to complete the argument to you.

The verse says:

"...but you do not understand their glorification; verily He is Forbearing, Forgiving."

Surah Isra' – Verse 45

وإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْءَانَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالاَخِرَةِ حِجَاباً مَسْتُوراً

45. "And when you recite the Qur'an, We place between you, and those who do not believe in the Hereafter, a hidden barrier."

Occasion of the Revelation

This noble verse has been descended with regard to a group of pagans who used to do harm to the Prophet (S) while he used to read the Qur'an at night within a corner of the House of Ka'bah. They used to throw stone at him and they also used to obstruct or stand in the way of him to invite people to embrace Islam.

The Lord, through His grace, made it impossible for them to hurt him. Perhaps, it was owing to the awe and fear which He inspired in them from the Prophet (S).

Pursuing our discussion of the previous holy verses, this question may be raised for some as to how it is that the pagans avoid accepting the reality of the issue of monotheism despite its self-explanatory nature which is widely accepted by all beings of the world and testified by them.

Why is it that they hear the eloquently expressed and explicit verses of the Qur'an and do not wake up?

The Lord proclaims to the Prophet:

"And when you recite the Qur'an, We place between you, and those who do not believe in the Hereafter, a hidden barrier."

This '***veil***' or '***barrier***' was that same obstinacy, tenacity, egotism, arrogance and ignorance which used to hinder them from having access to the Qur'anic facts, putting them at a dead end in their mental and

rational quest for knowledge, and would not permit them to grasp or acquire an understanding of such obvious facts as monotheism, resurrection, and the authenticity of the call of the Prophet (S) and the like.

It is for this reason that we declare that if somebody intends to follow the straight path of the truth, remaining secure from deviations and seductions, he must, first of all, seek to reform and reconstruct his own self.

Surah Isra' – Verse 46

وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَي قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْراً وَإِذَا ذَكَرْتَ رَبَّكَ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ وَحْدَهُ وَلَّوْا عَلَي أَدْبَارِهِمْ نُفُوراً

46. "And We have placed coverings on their hearts lest they should understand it (the Qur'an) and in their ears a heaviness. And when you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'an, they turn their backs in aversion."

The Arabic term /'akinnah/ is the plural form of /kan an/ or /kann/, which signifies some means of covering.

The Qur'anic term /waqr/ means 'partial deafness'. We have verses similar to this one in other Suras as well!

We have over a thousand times the term monotheism, reiterated in the Qur'an, though, it is unfortunate that the blind-hearted ones are deprive and are being at an unease when hearing those verses regarding monotheism. However, they are pleased to hear words of praise for paganism and absurd materials.

Nowadays, whenever the issue monotheism is discussed, some detest it, though they are being attracted to the remarks made by the Eastern or the Western agents.

The Qur'an says:

"And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink, and when those besides Him are mentioned, lo! They are joyful."[8]

The blissful Qur'an has compared such escapist groups from the truth to the donkeys which flee from the lions.[9]

Certainly, a confined soul and a dead heart does not receive the true spirit of the knowledge and wisdom which are offered by the Qur'an, for hearing and simple understanding of the facts of the Qur'an is different from the understanding in depth of them and the ensuing pleasure which one obtains this way.

The verse says:

"And We have placed coverings on their hearts lest they should understand it** (**the Qur'an**) **and in their ears a heaviness. And when you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'an, they turn their backs in aversion."

Surah Isra' – Verse 47

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَي إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلاَّ رَجُلاً مَسْحُوراً

47. "We are well-aware of what they listen to when they are listening to you, and when they are whispering** (**with each other**)**, when the unjust say** (**unto the believers**)**! 'You are thus following none but a man bewitched'."

We have it in commentaries that each one of the chiefs of pagans used to attend behind the house of the Prophet secretly and without informing each other so that, in the darkness of night, they could hear the voice of the Qur'an and thereupon analyze it.

They would bump into each other at times in the darkness and recognized one another, and thus, blamed themselves, reaffirming the fact that while they could not dispense with the voice of Muhammad (S), how could then they expect the common folk to behave in this respect.

This noble verse sympathizes with the Messenger of Allah, recommending him not to despair because of the lack of respect which the pagans showed towards him, for everything is clear before Him.

It is for this reason that He says:

"We are well-aware of what they listen to when they are listening to you, and when they are whispering** (**with each other**)**, when the unjust say** (**unto the believers**)**! 'You are thus following none but a man bewitched'."

The main aim is that We are aware of their mood while they are listening to the Qur'an and once they leave you, engage themselves in praying, some call you a sorcerer, others regard you as a poet, and, as they notice the respect of people to the Divine leaders, they hit them by false accusations.

Surah Isra' – Verse 48

انظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الاَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلاً

48. "**(**O' Prophet!**) **Behold how they strike similitudes for you, so they have gone astray, therefore,

they cannot find the way (***to truth***)*.”*

Occasion of the Revelation

Ibn Abbas asserts that: Abū Sufyan, Abu Jahl, and the like sometimes came to call on the Prophet (S) and listened to his words. One day, one of them told others:

“I have not got any idea as to what Muhammad (S) says. I only notice that his lips move.”

However, Abu Sufyan answered:

“I am of the opinion that some of his words are truthful.”

Abū Jahl suggested:

“He is crazy”,

while Abū Lahab added:

“He is a soothsayer.”

The other one said:

“He is a poet,”

under which circumstances of futile speech and inconvenient accusations, the verse was revealed.

In this noble verse, again addressing the Prophet (S), He declares in a short statement, which is a pounding answer and a blow to this seduced group, implying: Watch carefully as to how they are setting examples in your case.

One is calling you a sorcerer while the other one calls you as someone bewitched; one calls you a soothsayer while the other ones call you insane and, therefore, they are all being seduced and, hence, unable to discover the truth for themselves.

The verse says:

“(***O’ Prophet!***) ***Behold how they strike similitudes for you, so they have gone astray, therefore, they cannot find the way*** (***to truth***)*.”*

This does not imply that the path leading towards the truth is not transparent and the profile of the truth remains hidden. On the contrary, they have not got the right kind of eyes to see, and, hence, they have lost their rational attitude because of their tenacity, ignorance, fanaticism, and obstinacy which have all put their sense of reasoning out of work.

Surah Isra' – Verses 49 - 50

وَقَالُوا أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَاماً وَرُفَاتاً أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقاً جَدِيداً

قُلْ كُونُوا حِجَارَةً أَوْ حَدِيداً

49. "And they say: 'What! When we are bones and (scattered) dust, shall we then certainly be raised up into a new creation'?"
50. "Say: '(Nay!) be you stones or iron,"

The Arabic term /ruf at/ signifies shredded clay (Mufrad at Raqib). In the verses of the Qur'an, no reason has been stated by the disbelievers for their rejection due to resurrection. All one finds in them consist of astonishments, questionings and remoteness everywhere. By putting forth some queries in this connection, they seek to incite skepticism in others.

The Qur'an, in answer to them, relies on knowledge as well as Allah's power and Wisdom in the process of creation. There are also examples offered from nature and historical records as well as, from man, himself which were non-existent at first and emerged later on. Therefore, the Lord is able to re-create all beings after death.

Thus, in the previous verses, the issue dealt with concerned 'monotheism' itself as well as campaign against paganism. Nonetheless, the great issue involved in here relates to the Resurrection, which tends to supplement the significant issue of monotheism and which provides the answers to the three queries raised by disbelievers of resurrection.

They asked: Once we are spread around as decayed bones, shall we be surely raised up again; thus recreated once again?

Such a statement exhibits the fact that the Prophet (S) always tended of discuss the significant issue of the 'physical resurrection', asserting the fact that one's body will be reassembled after being scattered, otherwise, if the issue involved related to the matter of "spiritual resurrection", the objections raised by the opponents would, by no means, make any sense at all.

In the interpretation of the ensuing verse, while facing the challenges of the pagans who asked as to how they would be enlivened and mustered in the Hereafter, in which case they would be nothing except remaining bones and dust, the Lord, addressing the Prophet, responds: O' Muhammad (S)!

Say to them! The bones are peanuts while if you were made up of stones and iron He could re-enliven you, returning to you the joy and freshness of life as well.

The verse says:

“And they say: ‘What! When we are bones and (scattered) dust, shall we then certainly be raised up into a new creation’?”

“Say: ‘(Nay!) be you stones or iron,”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 51

أَوْ خَلْقاً مِّمَّا يَكْبُرُ فِي صُدُورِكُمْ فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَا قُلِ الَّذِي فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَسَيُنْغِضُونَ إِلَيْكَ رُؤُوسَهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَي هُوَ قُلْ عَسَي أَن يَكُونَ قَرِيباً

51. “Or any (other) creature harder in your minds!’ They will immediately say: ‘Who will return us?’ Say: ‘He Who created you the first time.’ Then, they will shake their heads at you, and say: ‘When will it be? Say: ‘Maybe it will be nigh’.”

Man will be dismembered and turned into dust after death, but the earth is the source of everything which provides man with life. Plants grow out of soil and living beings flourish on the soil.

Therefore, to re-enliven the dead out of soil is not to be considered as an ordeal by the Lord, given the fact that you have such materials as iron and stone even creatures in mind which are harder than soil and which are far more remote from life than soil, the Lord is, hence, capable of re-enlivening and re-invigorating them as well as everything.

The verse says:

“Or any (other) creature harder in your minds!’...”

The rejecters of Resurrection have got no reason for denying it. The only question relating to the fact as to when and how are we going to be enliven, and by who? The answer provided by the Qur’an is that that same Lord Who has created you in the first place, has also got the power to re-create you as well. The timing of this is not at all far away; maybe it is coming soon.

The verse continues saying:

“...They will immediately say: ‘Who will return us?’...”

Ultimately, to their astonishment, they shake their heads at you, asking you when this resurrection occurs and has its timing?

The verse adds:

“...Say: ‘He Who created you the first time.’ Then, they will shake their heads at you, and say:

'When will it be?..."

By raising this objection, in fact, they wanted to unveil this matter that supposing this 'earthly matter' is convertible into human shape and supposing we accept the power of Allah with respect to this, this issue is a long-term promise which is far from clear as to when that will take place.

The Qur'an, answers them:

"...Say: 'Maybe it will be nigh'."

Certainly, it is approaching soon, for the entire life-span of this world is very short and is just a passing moment when compared to the endless life in the Hereafter.

Moreover, if the resurrection was to be regarded as far away by our small and limited criteria, the threshold of the resurrection day, which is death, is not far away, for your death is 'a minor resurrection day' as compared to the 'major resurrection' when it is time for the evaluation of the acts of human beings.

Surah Isra' – Verse 52

يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً

52. "A day when He will call you forth, then you shall answer with His praise, yet thinking that you have tarried but a little while (in the world or in the purgatory)."

Without mentioning any accurate date for the resurrection day, the Qur'an mentions some of the characteristics of it in this noble verse, implying that: This return to life is that same day on which you will be called forth from your tombs, and you will accept the call while praising the Lord.

The holy verse says:

"A day when He will call you forth, then you shall answer with His praise..."

It is the same day when the distance between death and resurrection, that is, the purgatory, will be regarded as a short time by you. You will then realize that you have only paused for a moment in the purgatory.

The verse in this regard says:

"...yet thinking that you have tarried but a little while (in the world or in the purgatory)."

Some of the commentators of the glorious Qur'an are of the belief that this verse is being addressed to the believers, for, it is they who will answer the Lord while praise Him, and it is they who regard their stay

in the purgatory as short, for, they have had a happy time in their graves and have received no punishment therein. Obviously, the days of joy and happiness are short.

1. Refer to Jawami‘-ul-Jami‘, and other ‘Books on Theology’ for further information.
2. Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 21
3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 74
4. Surah Saba’, No. 34, verse 10
5. Bihar, vol. 95, p. 372
6. Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan
7. Bihar, vol. 64, p. 27
8. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 45
9. Surah Al-Muddaththir, No. 74, verse 50

Section 6: Gentleness in Dealing Enjoined

Surah Isra’ – Verse 53

وَقُل لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلإِنسَانِ عَدُوّاً مُبِيناً

53. “And say to My servants to speak what is best. Verily, the Satan sows dissensions among them. Verily the Satan unto man is an open enemy.”

As the discussion in the foregoing verses centered around the issues of the origin and the resurrection and the proofs regarding these two main ideological beliefs, here the Qur’an instructs the manner of conducting a dialogue and disputation with the dissidents, especially the pagans, for, no matter how elevated in rank the school might be, the powerful logic will also be rendered useless, but if it is not coupled with correct methods, discussion and disputations, and instead of affection and favour harshness and rudeness prevail, it will be fruitless.

Therefore, the verse proclaims:

“And say to My servants to speak what is best…”

The best, in here, signifies what is most appropriate from the view point of content, eloquence, and that which is best in terms of ethical virtues and humanitarian methods, for, if one distances himself from what is best speech, and tends to rudeness and quarrelsomeness in his words, it recalls the Satan’s interference and inciting corruption amongst them.

The verse says:

"...Verily, the Satan sows dissensions among them..."

Do not remain heedless of the fact that the Satan does not remain idle. The Satan is always round the corner, for he has always been an open enemy of mankind.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...Verily the Satan unto man is an open enemy."

Sometimes, the believers who had recently accepted the faith, following their previous ancient habits, used to provoke aggression against those who opposed them.

Moreover, those humiliating expressions of the dissidents towards the Prophet (S), some of which were mentioned in the previous verses, such as: sorcerer, insane, soothsayer, poet, etc... sometimes caused the believers to lose control of themselves and raise up against the opponents in a verbal attack, saying whatever they wanted.

The Qur'an seeks to hinder them from such things, persuading them to call with leniency and selection of softest words so as to prevent the Satan from inciting corruption.

Surah Isra' – Verse 54

رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِن يَشَأْ يَرْحَمْكُمْ أَوْ إِن يَشَأْ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلاً

54. "Your Lord is more knowledgeable about you than yourself. He will have mercy on you if He pleases, or He will punish you (for your behaviour) if He pleases, and We have not sent you as a warden over them."

In the previous verse, the stress was based on one's manner of speech with soft words. In this verse, there are some of its aspects explained as follows: One must not regard himself as superior to others.

One must not humiliate others, not even calling the pagans as 'hell-inhabitants' while declaring oneself to be one of those who go to the Paradise, for such a manner leads to rebellion and sedition. Moreover, how on earth do we know about the happy ending of each of us? Allah is more knowledgeable; He excuses if He pleases and punishes if He pleases.

The verse says:

"Your Lord is more knowledgeable about you than yourself. He will have mercy on you if He pleases, or He will punish you (for your behaviour) if He pleases..."

In the end, concluding the verse, He addresses the Prophet (S) and, in order to console him for the

extraordinary unease which he had suffered at the hands of the pagans as a result of their lack of faith, He says:

“...and We have not sent you as a warden over them.”

So that you feel as the advocate of the people which compels you to make them definitely embrace the faith. It is your duty to openly take the message to them, and call them earnestly to the truth. If they embrace the faith, so much the better for them; otherwise, no harm will be done to you.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 55

وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَي بَعْضٍ وءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُوراً

55. “And your Lord is more knowledgeable than any one who is in the heavens and the earth; and, certainly, We have made some of the prophets excel others, and to David We gave ‘Zab�r’.”

In the previous verse, the issue in question involved the knowledge of Allah in connection with man. In this verse, the issue in question relates to His knowledge over all the beings whether the celestial or earthly ones.

The verse says:

“And your Lord is more knowledgeable than any one who is in the heavens and the earth...”

In other words, in this verse the meaning is beyond that, implying that Allah is aware not only of your status but also of that of all those who are in the skies and on the earth and He is the most aware of every one and knows their value better.

Then whoever He elects from among the angels and the prophets for a matter is not undue that merely He pleases it, but since He is aware of the true innate value of them and knows them eligible for the job, He elects them.

Then He adds:

“...and, certainly, We have made some of the prophets excel others...”

By saying:

‘We have made some prophets excel others’,

here is meant the ‘’Ulul‘azm’, ‘prophets of the Book’.

We have it in traditions that there have been one hundred and twenty four thousand prophets, some of

whom have been appointed for all the people and possess 'celestial Books'. some, also, were commissioned for a particular region or over a certain group of people and were under the command of a greater prophet, carrying out his mission.

In other words, although prophets were placed at he highest echelon of virtues, there was a hierarchy for them which ranked them at various levels, excelling some over the others.

This sentence is, in fact, an answer to one of the objections of the pagans, who used to claim in a humiliating tone of voice that: Had the Lord not any one else other than the orphan Muhammad (S) to appoint as a prophet? Moreover, what made him be the leading figure among all the prophets and the 'Seal of the Prophets'?

The Qur'an implies that it is not astonishing that Allah is aware of the human values of every single individual and, hence, He has selected His prophets from among the bulk of the people. He has bestowed one with the title of "khalil-ullah" (the friend of Allah).

He has conferred the title of "Rūh-ullah" on another one of His prophets. He has selected the Prophet of Islam (S) as "Habib-ullah" (the friend of Allah).

Briefly speaking, He has made some superior to others in His blessings in accordance with the criteria which He himself deems fit and His Wisdom so deems worthy of.

Although Dawood was in charge of a vast territory, the Lord does not regard this matter as his prime object of pride.

On the contrary, He regards the Book of 'Zabūr' as what he must take pride in so that the pagans become aware of the fact that the glory of man does not depend on his wealth or property or his authority or his apparent domination. At the same time, being an orphan or being stripped off all of one's belongings will not indicate to the blame of him.

The verse concludes:

"...and to David We gave 'Zabūr'."

Surah Isra' – Verse 56

قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُم مِن دُونِهِ فَلاَ يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفَ الضُّرِّ عَنكُمْ وَلاَ تَحْوِيلاً

56. "Say: Call on those whom you asserted (to be your god) besides Him; so they shall neither have the ability of removing the affliction from you, nor to change (it)."

To call on any one other than the Lord, and to put one's hope into this matter, is merely a daydream, for

no one else but Allah is able to remove the dangers or transfer them to another one or, to convert or to reduce them by any means.

Incidentally, one’s belief in intercession occurring by Allah’s saints of removing the difficulties and chastisement takes place by Allah’s permission, and is a different matter.

This verse, once again, deals with the pagans and, pursuing past discussions, the Qur’an addresses the Prophet (S) and declares:

“Say: Call on those whom you asserted (to be your god) besides Him; so they shall neither have the ability of removing the affliction from you, nor to change (it).”

In fact, this verse, as many of other verses of the Qur’an, obliterates the logic of the pagans in this way which holds that the worship of the idols is either for the sake of acquiring benefits or for the sake of repelling harms; but, they have got no power of their own to solve difficulties, nor would they be able to displace any of them.

The application of the Arabic pronoun /’alla￿ina/ in this verse explains the point that the objective in here does not exclude all the worshipping objects other than ‘Allah’, but the aim expressed here refers to such objects of worship like angels, Hadrat Massih (as) and the like.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 57

أُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَي رَبِّـهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّـكَ كَانَ مَحْذُوراً

57. “Those whom they call upon, themselves search for means of approaching their Lord which of them is nearer, and they hope for His mercy, and fear His punishment. Verily, the punishment of your Lord is to be dreaded of.”

Some commentators are of the opinion that the prophets who call the people to the path of the truth, they themselves seek some means of support, especially the ones who can make them nigh to Allah closer and in a speedier manner, or the mediation of every prophet who is in closer proximity to Allah.

In numerous quotations, we have it under this verse that the two sides of the balance between fear and hope must be paralleled, otherwise, the person who is being involved, will either become desperate or arrogant (as a result of being unduly hopeful).

Anyway, this verse in fact provides justification for what was mentioned in the previous verse. It implies whether you know why they are unable to solve your problem without the Lord’s permission. The reason why they do such a thing is that they invocate to the Lord for solving their own difficulties. They try to

approach His Pure Essence, asking Him for whatever they wish.

The verse says:

"Those whom they call upon, themselves search for means of approaching their Lord..."

"...which of them is nearer..."

"...and they hope for His mercy..."

"...and fear His punishment..."

The reason why it is so is that the punishment inflicted by Him is so grave in intensity that it is always to be avoided.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily, the punishment of your Lord is to be dreaded of."

In other words, the verse means: those prophets and angels, whom you call gods, try to find access to Allah through praying and worshipping to be might to Allah so that it becomes transparent that whose position would be ranked as higher before the Lord.

That is, when the prophets, with the high rank and honour that they have with Him and are nearer to Him than you do not worship any one but Allah, and seek for a mean to approach Him, then why should you not be as such, you that are not nearer to Allah?

Therefore, the worship of the Lord alone, and the abandoning of polytheism and dualism in matters of worship are all more indispensable for you. Thus, the Lord seeks to urge the people to imitate the prophets.

Some, however, claim that the angels and Hadrat Massih etc, whom you are regarding as god, are only subservient to the Lord themselves and seek to approach Him and come into closer proximity to Allah through their acts of worship, thus coming into closer contact with His Mercy. Or else, they yearn to know which of them is in closer proximity to the Allah's grace.

Nevertheless, they try to seek forgiveness from the Lord, hoping for His mercy and grace through their obedience, and fearing His reappraisals because of unruly. Just like all of the servants of Allah, they, too, follow the path of worship.

Yes, the punishment of your Lord is too hard for you to bear, and all must avoid it.

Surah Isra' – Verse 58

وَإِن مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلاَّ نَحْنُ مُهْلِكُوهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوهَا عَذَاباً شَدِيداً كَانَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُوراً

58. "And there is not a town but We shall annihilate it before the Day of Resurrection or chastise it with a severe chastisement. That is written in the Book, (the Protected Table)."

The Arabic term /qaryah/ refers to the gathering place of people, whether it is a town or a village. The objective of the Qur'anic term /'al kit ab/ here is either the 'Protected Tablet' or the Qur'an in which the reasons for the fall and annihilation of the nations are explained.

Therefore, following our discussion about the pagans, which we noted concerning monotheism and resurrection in the foregoing verses, this noble verse, with an awakening tone, advises them and illustrates the end and the annihilation of this world in face of their rational vision, so that they may know that this world is a mortal one and the eternal world remains elsewhere, thus preparing themselves for the consequences of their behaviour.

The verse says:

"And there is not a town but We shall annihilate it before the Day of Resurrection or chastise it with a severe chastisement..."

Those who engage in evil acts and are oppressive, and the stiff-necked unruly, are to be wiped out by Allah's punishment, and the rest will be annihilated by death due to the natural causes or by common accidents.

Eventually, this world will end and all will pave the path of annihilation. This is a decisively obvious principal which is registered in the Divine Book, (the 'Protected Table').

The verse remarks:

"...That is written in the Book, (the Protected Table)."

Surah Isra' – Verse 59

وَمَا مَنَعَنَآ أَن نُرْسِلَ بِالآيَاتِ إِلاَّ أَن كَذَّبَ بِهَا الاَوَّلُونَ وَءَاتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالآيَاتِ إِلاَّ تَخْوِيفاً

59. "And nothing prevented Us that We should send the signs (requested by the people) save that the former nations rejected them; and We gave to Thamud the She-Camel, a manifest sign,

but they did injustice unto her; and We do not send signs (requested) but to warn.”

The pretext seeking pagans of Mecca used to ask the Prophet (S) for miracles frequently, among which was that they wanted him to turn some of the mountains of Mecca (the Saf a Mountain) into gold, or to displace mountains and agricultural land be made available in their place.

The Lord declares that, according to the historical experiences, the obstinate pagans would not embrace the faith by witnessing such signs either, and the system of creation will not be made subservient to the obstinate individuals.

If a miracle is performed according to the request of the people, and they still remain disbelievers, their worldly chastisement is certain to take place.

A camel is an animal. However, the Lord, with respect to the camel of Salih, says: /naqatullah/, (the She-Camel of Allah).

Since whatever relates to the Lord in some ways possesses sanctity. Even for the name of Abu-Lahab, because it is in the Qur’an, one can not touch it before making ritual ablution.

Miracles are of two types

Some miracles are such that, without them, one cannot acquire cognition of the prophecy. Obviously, such miracles must take place, whether the people embrace the faith or they do not.

Others are because of Allah’s grace, and may lead to the increase in one’s faith. These miracles are done by the grace of the Lord.

Those miracles which are outside the category of the two, are not shown by the Lord. Thus, He implies: We do not send Our verses for the fact that your forefathers had requested such verses to become believer and once We sent them, they refused to embrace the faith. You, too, follow their path, and will refuse to believe as they did.

The verse says:

“And nothing prevented Us that We should send the signs (requested by the people) save that the former nations rejected them...”

Then, the Qur’an points the finger to a clear example of the issue by saying:

“...and We gave to Thamūd the She-Camel, a manifest sign...”

It was the same camel which came out of the mountain upon Allah’s command, for they had requested such a miracle: an illuminating miracle. Nonetheless, they refused to become believers, so they did harm to that she-camel, and killed her.

The verse says:

"...but they did injustice unto her..."

In principle, it is not Allah's procedure that everyone who requests a miracle, the prophet submits to his request, and He does not send the verses and the miracles except for inspiring awe in people and delivering an ultimatum to them.

The verse says:

"...and We do not send signs (***requested***) ***but to warn."***

In other words, Allah (s.w.t.) makes His verses and miracles apparent through the prophets so that, by witnessing them, the people receive instructions, fearing Allah's punishment and embrace the faith.

Explanations

The prophets were always entangled with obstinate individuals despite having various miracles.

"...save that the former notions rejected them..."

Allah is all-powerful in every situation, though His procedure is based upon wisdom, and not that of the gratification of the people's desires.

Sacrilege and the denial of the miracles will lead to the Divine fury and chastisement.

"...and We gave to Thamūd the She-Camel, a manifest sign, but they did injustice unto her..."

Miracles serve as the means for the people's cognition, enlightenment, and as warning for them.

"...but to warn."

Surah Isra' – Verse 60

وإِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّؤْيَا الَّتِي أَرَيْنَاكَ إِلاَّ فِتْنَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُونَةَ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ وَنُخَوِّفُهُمْ فَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلاَّ طُغْيَاناً كَبِيراً

60. "And (***remember***) ***when We said to you: 'Verily your Lord encompasses the people;' and we did not make the dream which We showed you and the cursed tree in the Qur'an, save*** (***as***) ***a trial for the people; and We cause them to fear, but it only increases them in great insolence."***

Now, the Lord, addressing His Prophet (S), states that he should remember the time when He told him: his Lord is knowledgeable about the state of the people and their good and bad deeds, and He knows

who merits rewards and who deserves punishments.

He is All-powerful for the punishment and reward of the people. Therefore, all are within the range and scope of His power, and no one is capable of exceeding the limits of His Will and Providence.

The holy verse says:

"And (remember) when We said to you: 'Verily your Lord encompasses the people;'..."

Thus, Allah encourages the Prophet (S) to go on with his process of propagation, and He promises him that He will save him from the harm of the people, and, eventually, He will conquer Mecca for him.

Incidentally, the issue involved in the previous holy verse concerned the killing of Salih's she-camel, and in this verse, the issue in question deals with the whole damned lot who were the murderers of 'Ahl-ul-Bayt', the 'Prophet's household'.

The verse continues saying:

"...and we did not make the dream which We showed you and the cursed tree in the Qur'an, save (as) a trial for the people..."

We have it in the quotations that the Ahl-ul-Bayt remarked:

"We are no less in position than the Salih's she-camel. Any insult to us would lead to annihilation."[1]

In the blissful Qur'an, there are several dreams cited for the Prophet of Islam (S), one of which has been cited at the time of the outbreak of the 'Battle of Badr', in which, the Lord degraded and minimized the enemies in the sight of the Prophet (S) so that the Muslims would not lose courage. [2]

Another dream came upon him when he dreamed about the victorious arrival into Masjid-ul-Har am. [3]

A third dream was the one which is referred to in this verse. The first two dreams took place after the Hejrah and in Medina, while this third one came about in Mecca. Of course, some ascribe the dream in relation to 'Mi'raj' (Muhammad's ascension to Heaven) while the 'Mi'raj' took place in full awakening state but dreams come about while one is asleep.

That dream and the state of that cursed lot (the cursed tree) are the same and identical, for their end-result is one and the same. That is, they both provide the roots of evil for the people.

The Lord indicated this 'cursed tree' and their acts in dream to the Prophet (S) while he was asleep, saying that this is the cause of the evil of your people, and with the holy sentence:

"...'Verily your Lord encompasses the people;'..."

Allah Sought to Console Him

The Arabic term /šajarah/ signifies both 'a tree' as well as whatever else has got branches and offshoots. Therefore, it also refers to 'a tribe'. The Prophet (S) also remarked:

*"Ali and I are both from one tribe (the same 'pedigree' and 'line')."*4

This term also points to the chain of blood relations and race as in the case of 'family pedigree' which is called 'genealogical tree'. Therefore, the idiomatic expression 'the cursed tree', signify a whole lot of 'branches' and a well-rooted tribe which has got off-shoots as well, and which is cursed.

At the end of this verse, we have it that the Divine warning as for this 'cursed lot', or cursed tree, has brought no results except an increase in their viciousness and rebellion.

The holy verse says:

"...and We cause them to fear, but it only increases them in great insolence."

The phrase: /tuqy anan kabir/ "great insolence", has only been mentioned once in the Qur'an and only in this verse. Therefore, one must look out for a "cursed lot" and a tribe in the Qur'an which has been Muslim in appearance but dissident and rebellious inwardly and in the real sense with a kind of hypocrisy which causes the trial and sedition for people.

There are numerous causes of condemnation and cursing in the Qur'an such as: the Satan, the Jews, the hypocrites, the pagans, and the scholars who cover-up the truth as well as those who inflict harm on the Prophet (S).

However, it is only the hypocrites who accompany the Muslims and cause them the maximum injury by their hypocrisy, for the Satan, the people of the Book, and the pagans indicate clearly what they are, while the hypocrites, apparently Muslims, have always been the agents for sedition. 5

Some have held the opinion that the 'cursed tree' consist of the 'tree of Zaqq�m' which, in Hell, is the means of the Divine chastisement.

But there are also other things which have been used as the Divine punishment as well, and they do not provide sings for the condemnation of those means, like the River Nile, which drowned Pharaoh, or the angels who inflicted punishment on certain peoples, or the believers who served as the arms of Allah in punishment and annihilation of the pagans.

"Fight them (and) Allah will punish them at your hands..."6

Alameh Tabataba'i (q.s.), in his discussion dealing with the quotations concerning 'Surah Al-Qadr, No. 97', quotes from some outstanding of Sunni sources such as: Khatib Baqd adi, Turmathi, Ibn-Jarir,

Tabar ani, Bihaqi, Ibn Mardooyah, as well as Shi'ah sources such as Kafi, etc, that the blissful Prophet (S) dreamed of panthers climbing his pulpit and it saddened him greatly.

Gabriel descended when the Prophet (S) recounted his dream for him.

Gabriel ascended to the heaven, and, on his return, He brought along with him the following verses:

"Have you then considered if We let them enjoy themselves for years."

"Then there comes to them that with which they are threatened,"

"That which they were made to enjoy shall not avail them?"[7]

This dream also caused the descending of Surah 'Al–Qadr' so as to comfort the Prophet (S) that if the 'Umayyads' ruled for a thousand months, We provided you with the Night of 'Qadr' in exchange, which is better than a thousand months.

The issue concerning the dreaming about the panthers, which overtook the government and were climbing the pulpit of the Prophet (S), has also been quoted from Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (as) [8]

The Sunni and Shi'ah commentators regard the 'Umayyads' as the 'coursed tree'.

Imam Sajjad (as) remarked: Gabriel adapted the panthers to the Umayyads. The Prophet (S) asked:

"Does this event take place during my era?"[9]

From among the Umayyads, the person who was most rebellious, and caused the advent of Karbala to come about, was 'Yazid', and this calamity was the greatest rebellion throughout history.

Explanations

The Lord uses the dreams at times to reveal some facts to the prophets and others.

Every event, even interpretation of dreams, can be used as a means for the testing of the people.

Those tribes and groups who incite deviations are the '***cursed tree***'

"...and the cursed tree in the Qur'an save (as) a trial for the people..."

Issuing warnings to the people, even to the cursed tribes and the 'cursed families' is among Allah's ways of treatment.

Warnings will have no impact on the tenacious people who are obstinate. 'An iron nail will not penetrate stones'.

"...but it only increase them in great insolence."

1. Bihar, vol. 28, p. 205, and vol. 50, p. 192
2. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 43
3. Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 27
4. Bihar, vol. 38, p. 309
5. Tafsir-Al-Mizan, under this verse.
6. Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 14
7. Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, verses 205-207
8. Tafsir-i-Tibyan
9. Tafsir-i-Lahiji

Section 7: Satan's Pride against Man

Surah Isra' – Verse 61

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلآئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلاَّ إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ ءَأَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ خَلَقْتَ طِيناً

61. "And (remember) when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate unto Adam'; so they (all) did prostrate except 'Iblis who said: 'Am I to prostrate to the one You have created of clay?'"

Here, the Qur'an alludes to the unruliness of 'Iblis with regard to the Allah's command, concerning the issue of prostration to Adam, and the viscous fate awaiting him, sums up the story.

Dealing with this issue, following the previous discussions about the obstinate pagans, indeed, reveals the fact that the complete and the total picture of arrogance, paganism, and unruliness has been the Satan. The Qur'an points out as to how his fate ended; hence, the followers of the Satan will meet their doom in just the same way.

At first, He says:

"And (remember) when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate unto Adam'; so they (all) did prostrate except 'Iblis..."

This prostration is some kind of modesty and humbleness for the sake of the glorification of the creation of man and his excellence over other beings or else it has been of the sort that has been performed, facing Allah for the creation of such an amazing creature.

The Satan which had been overwhelmed by arrogance and pride, and his egotism and conceit had covered a curtain over his intelligence, and thinking that 'the earth', which is the source of all blessings and the origin of all beings, is inferior to fire, addressing his objections to the Lord, the verse says about

him:

“...who said: ‘Am I to prostrate to the one You have created of clay?’”

Therefore, we repeatedly face the issue of the prostration of the angels in the Qur’an, and the unruliness of the Satan in this connection.

’Iblis is of the ‘Jinn’ lot,

“...he was of the jinn...”[1]

and has got an army:

“And the host of ’Iblis, all.”[2]

and has also got infantry battalions as well as a mounting army:

“...and collect your cavalry and infantry against them...”[3]

and is the cause of all deviations and, finally, his abstinence from prostration, provides a comparison between the earth and fire, where he said:

“...You created me of fire while you created him of clay’.”[4]

Surah Isra’ – Verse 62

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَكَ هذَا الَّذِي كَرَّمْتَ عَلَيَّ لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لاَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً

62. “He (the Satan) said: ‘Tell me, is this he whom you have honoured above me? If You respite me till the Day of Resurrection, I will certainly master his progeny, save a few.”

When the Satan noticed that, as a consequence of his arrogance and unruliness in face of the Lord’s command, he has become an outcast from the Lord’s holy sanctuary for ever, said humbly:

Were I to be given a respite till the resurrection day by You, I shall seduce all the progenitors of this human being, make them perish altogether starting from the scratch, seducing them all except a few of them.

The verse says:

“He (the Satan) said: ‘Tell me, is this he whom you have honoured above me? If You respite me till the Day of Resurrection, I will certainly master his progeny, save a few.”

The Arabic term /’ahtanikanna/ which is derived from the term /’ihtin ak/ means ‘eradicating’ something

or ‘uprooting’. Thus, when locusts perish an entire agricultural land, the Arabs say: “*locusts eradicated the farming.*” This Qur’anic expression, therefore, refers to the point that: I will uproot all of the children of Adam from the path of obedience, except a few of them.

There is the possibility that the Arabic term /’ihtanikanna/ is a derivation of /hanak/, meaning: ‘beneath the throat’.

When the rope or the bridle is placed around the neck of an animal, the Arabs often use the expression /hanatk-ad-dabbah/, meaning that ‘the animal was bridled’. In fact, the Satan wants to claim that he will put the bridle of temptation around the neck of all human beings thus leading them toward the wrong path.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 63

قَالَ اذْهَبْ فَمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ جَزَآؤُكُمْ جَزَآءً مَّوْفُوراً

63. “(Addressing the Satan), He said: ‘Depart! But whoever of them follows you, then verily Hell will be your recompense, a recompense in full!’”

Man is free in his acceptance of the path of the Lord and/or in pursuing the Satan.

The Lord’s punishment is all-encompassing; the guilty will be provided with both the divine chastisement which is due to their own sins, and the punishment for misleading others in their entirety either.

Incidentally, in order to realize an experimental field for all, and proper means for the education of the true devout believers, which all tend to shape man in the melting pot, and in order to become strong against the enemy, the Satan was provided with the means for survival and activities:

the verse says:

“(Addressing the Satan), He said: ‘Depart! But whoever of them follows you, then verily Hell will be your recompense, a recompense in full!’”

It is by means of this nature that He declares the method of testing and explains the ultimate aim of victory and defeat in this grand Divine trial.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 64

وَاسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُم بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِمْ بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِي الاَمْوَالِ وَالاَوْلاَدِ وَعِدْهُمْ وَمَايَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلاَّ غُرُوراً

64. “And startle whomever of them you can with your voice, and collect your cavalry and infantry against them; and share with them in wealth and children and make promises to them; and the Satan makes no promises to them except delusion.”

The Satan, at first, removes man’s instinct for monotheism by means of persuasion. Later, he seeks to invade him with his ammunitions and armies.

The Arabic term /’istifz az/ here signifies ‘stumbling’ or ‘slipping’ with speed and adeptness as well as by way of pushing.

The Satan does not just select one way for deceiving man. On the contrary, he usually entrenches man from all sides, accompanied by a number of other ways using all forms of persuasions, dissuasions, promises, aspirations, temptations, and enticements, which are as its mounting forces and its foot–soldiers, and in this course some people follow him.

We have it in quotations that he who has no fear of anyone in what he says and in what he does, or what he is said about; committing sins or back–biting openly, is a partner to the Satan.5

Other cases of forming partnership with the Satan, consist of: having forbidden sources of income, living on illegal money, adultery, raising corrupt and deviant offspring 6

And he who regards the Ahl–ul–Bayt (as) of the Prophet (S) as enemies, has allowed the Satan to enter into partnership with him.7

Unhealthy production and consumption, hoarding wealth, investment of foreign companies and foreign corporations, creation of scientific, cultural, and artistic centers as well as international games, which are colonial, are kinds of partnership with the Satan.

Anyway, explaining in an interesting and explicit fashion, He exposes the ways and means through which the Satan employs in his temptations. The Qur’an, addressing him, implies: you can provoke them each with your voice, and you can dispatch your mounting and infantry army units against them.

The verse says:

“And startle whomever of them you can with your voice, and collect your cavalry and infantry against them…”

The Satan possesses numerous aids and assistants who are of his own kind as well as from among mankind who help the Satan in seducing people. Some who are more powerful and speedier in act just like the mounting army; others are weaker and slower in action and behave just like infantry.

The verse, addressing the Satan, continues saying:

“…and share with them in wealth and children and make promises to them…”

Then the Qur'an warns that the Satan does not do anything else except deceiving them.

The verse says:

"...and the Satan makes no promises to them except delusion."

Surah Isra' – Verse 65

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ وَكَفَي بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلاً

65. "Verily (***as for***) ***My servants, you have not any authority over them; and your Lord suffices*** (***as their***) ***Guardian."***

Notwithstanding the fact that all people are the servants of Allah, the Lord, out of respect, has ascribed some to Himself by saying "***My servants***", as He has also used such a term for proximity concerning the inanimate objects as well as in the case of /bayti/ (My house).

'The servants of Allah', have also been introduced with specifications of 'faith' and 'trust' in another verse, those who are by no means dominated by the Satan. [8]

Certainly, the Satan carries out its temptation; establishes contacts, but they become constantly mindful and go on with their resistance. [9]

We have it in quotations that 'prayer call' and 'prayers' are two ways of expelling the Satan. [10]

Therefore, serving and worshipping the Lord provides one with insurance against satanic persuasions, temptations and Satanic deployments, for he who joins the Infinite Power, will become impenetrable.

The verse says:

"Verily (***as for***) ***My servants, you have not any authority over them; and your Lord suffices*** (***as their***) ***Guardian."***

Anyway, he who becomes the servant of Allah, He will take care of him as his advocate, as his guardian, and as his superintendent.

Surah Isra' – Verse 66

رَبُّكُمُ الَّذِي يُزْجِي لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ فِي الْبَحْرِ لِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيماً

66. "Your Lord is He Who makes the ship go for you through the sea that you may seek of His

grace; verily He is ever Merciful to you.”

This verse pursues the discussions which we had before about monotheism and about the campaigns against paganism. It enters this discussion through two different ways: by reasoning, and through the way of conscience and the inside or internal system.

At first, the Holy Qur’an alludes to the monotheism through reasoning, saying:

“Your Lord is He Who makes the ship go for you through the sea…”

Obviously, there are numerous benefits for transportation available by sea-routes, including cheapness of traveling, their suitability for being used at all the times by all the general public and for transportation of goods passengers and fishing.

The role of the seas in the field of providing oxygen, production of water vapor, clouds, and rain; developing beds for fishery industries and wanders of material, plants and animals are remarkable. The amazing surprises they present in matters relating to the inanimate objects, plant and animal life are abundant.

We read in the ‘Joushan Kabir’ supplication:

“O! The One Whose wonders of creation are found in abundance at sea!”

Then the Qur’an adds that the aim of all these preparations are that you benefit from His blessings in matters relating to your travels, to the transportation of your goods, merchandise, and to whatever else which is of help to your religion as well as to your worldly life, for the Lord is kind to you.

The holy verse says:

“…that you may seek of His grace; verily He is ever Merciful to you.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 67

وإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَن تَدْعُونَ إِلاَّ إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاكُمْ إِلَي الْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ وَكَانَ الإنسَانُ كَفُوراً

67. “And when affliction touches you in the sea, away will go those on whom you call except him; but as He delivers you to the land, you turn away (from Him); and man is very ungrateful.”

One of the reasons as to why monotheism is inherent in human nature is the fact that man turns to an invisible point to save him when he is caught in distress and despair.

A man, who was an atheist, once asked Imam Sadiq (as) to provide him with a proof for proving the existence of the Lord.

The Imam asked him:

“Have you ever embarked a ship which has been wrecked?”

“Yes,”

He answered:

“Only once. We were once ship wrecked and I used a piece of wood.”

The Imam (as) then asked:

“Were you then focusing on a power to save you?”

He answered:

“Yes,”

He (as) continued:

“That very invisible power is the Lord, the Almighty.”

Therefore, when at loss in a sea and winds stop blowing or the sea waves threaten you, etc, all your objects of worship will be forgotten, except the only Lord. in such a circumstance, it is Allah Who can save you, to Whom you appeal and you call on no one else.

However, as you were saved by Him from drowning; and felt safe, you will turn away from Him and refuse to believe in Him and to obey Him being ungrateful, and man does this too often.

The verse says:

“And when affliction touches you in the sea, away will go those on whom you call except him; but as He delivers you to the land, you turn away (from Him)…”

Certainly, worldly interests are so enticing that man tends to forget everything shortly, after being saved of the affliction and neglecting Allah after being saved is an explicit example of ungratefulness.

The verse continues saying:

“…and man is very ungrateful.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 68

أَفَأَمِنتُمْ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ الْبَرِّ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِباً ثُمَّ لاَ تَجِدُوا لَكُمْ وَكِيلاً

68. “Do you then feel secure that He will not cause the shore to swallow you up, or send on you squall of pebbles? Then, you will not find protector for yourselves.”

The annihilation of the former nations has been completed in various ways. The Lord has made the earth bury some of the violators and enemies, while He has made others drown at sea. Some have been stoned in landslip, and others have been perished in thunderbolts.

Therefore, the Lord is evermore capable of annihilation of the pagans. If today you are saved from a ship-wreck at sea, landing safely, do not feel to be safe in other circumstances, or that you are secure from future punishments.

This same feeling of security from chastisement provides grounds for our negligence and unruliness. Man is at Allah’s power whenever and wherever he is; whether be it at sea or on a dry land; makes no difference for Allah.

The verse says:

“Do you then feel secure that He will not cause the shore to swallow you up, or send on you squall of pebbles?...”

Therefore, Do you think that Allah is unable to inflict severe punishment on you, whether at sea or on land? Do you then feel safe if there is a tornado in which you get caught, stoning you to death? Such a chastisement is harsher than being drowned at sea.

Thus, why do you not look out for a protector to guard you off all dangers?

The verse concludes:

“...Then, you will not find protector for yourselves.”

Surah Isra’ – Verse 69

أَمْ أَمِنتُمْ أَن يُعِيدَكُمْ فِيهِ تَارَةً أُخْرَي فَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ قَاصِفاً مِنَ الرِّيحِ فَيُغْرِقَكُم بِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ ثُمَّ لاَ تَجِدُوا لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا بِهِ تَبِيعاً

69. “Or do you feel secure that He will (not) send you back into it (the sea) another time, and then send on you a fierce gale then drown you for your disbelief; then you will find no prosecutor for you against Us?”

The Arabic term /hasib/ refers to a storm in land and the Qur’anic word /q asif/ here refers to a sea-hurricane, and it is a tornado with a severe sound as if the things are broken up.

The Qur’anic term /tabi‘/ which is a derivative of /taba‘/, refers to the person who seeks for blood-price

and retribution, and follows up his appeal processes for lawsuit. Thus, He implies in this noble verse that:

You the oblivious! Are you of the opinion that this was the last time that you went on a sea journey? Or do you feel safe and secure if going on such a journey next time and a pounding tornado will not be sent to you to inflict punishment on you for your lack of gratefulness? Then, you shall find no savior facing Us?

The verse says:

"Or do you feel secure that He will (***not***) ***send you back into it*** (***the sea***) ***another time, and then send on you a fierce gale then drown you for your disbelief; then you will find no prosecutor for you against Us?"***

Thus, we must not feel proud when having temporary comfort. The danger is always near us. By being saved from an affliction, the danger is not done with for good forever. Neglecting Allah after being saved serves as a good example of ungratefulness towards Him. No power can face the Lord, and Allah is not responsible to anyone.

Surah Isra' – Verse 70

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُم مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَي كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلاً

70. "And, indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, and We carried them on the land and the sea; and We provided them with sustenance of the good things; and We preferred them greatly over many of those We created."

As attaching importance to the personality of individuals is one way of educating and guiding them, following its discussion concerning pagans and deviants in the previous verses, here the glorious Qur'an deals with the highly valued personality of humankind and Allah's blessings regarding them.

So that, noting this extraordinary high value, he should, not spoil such a precious material easily, selling it at a cheap rate.

The noble verse says:

"And, indeed, We have honored the children of Adam..."

Afterwards, the Holy Qur'an refers to the three aspects of Allah's blessings to man, implying that He transported them at sea and on land by the different means of transportation which He made available to them.

The verse says:

"...and We carries them on the land and sea..."

And, the other one is that:

"...and We provided them with sustenance of the good things..."

It continues saying:

"...and We preferred them greatly over many of those We created."

Why Man Is the Most Superior of Allah's Creatures

The answer is not very complicated for we know that man is the only being that is formed of different potentialities, whether material and spiritual, bodily and mentally, and he can grow up within contradictions. Man is unlimited from the point of capacity and development.

There is a famous tradition quoted from Hadrat Ali (as) which is a clear evidence for this claim, where he says:

"Allah has created all creatures into 3 different categories: Angels, Animals and Human Beings. The angels have got reasoning without any passion or fury but without intellect. The animals are collections of passions and fury. But, man is a collection unity of both; one of which must prevail. If his reason overcomes his passion, he will be superior to the angels, and if his passions dominate his reason, he will be just inferior to animals."[11]

As for the human dignity, which is at times spiritual and acquired and is with Allah, such as that kind of dignity (or honour) which is exclusive to the men of virtue.

The Qur'an says:

"Verily the most honourable of you with Allah is the most virtuous one."[12]

At other times, human dignity (or honour) is found in the process of creation, like:

"...in the best make."[13]

which has been mentioned about the creation of man.

The objective of /karramn a/ in this verse, perhaps, is the second aspect of it. Man's dignity is both in his creation, intelligence, intellect, and talents, and in having the Divine laws, the leadership of the 'immaculate' and of being prostrated to by the angels.

Incidentally, though man has been excelled to all creatures by Allah, even to the angels, his failure in

selecting the right path, and his indecent acts bring him down to the lowest possible positions:

"...the lowest of the low"*[14]*,

which equates those of the animals and even lower than them.

"...is as the likeness of the donkey..."[15]

The examples are:

"...so his parable is like the parable of a dog..."[16]

and

"...they are as cattle, rather they are more astray..."*[17]*,

or

"...as stone or even worse..."[18]

This verse refers to both dignity (or honour) and virtues. The differences of the two may consist of:

Honour: can be considered as advantages which are lacking in others, while, virtues, consist of positive points which are also found in others.

Honour refers to the Allah-given blessings which exist within man with no struggles, while, virtues concern the blessings which have been gained by the effort of man accompanied with the Divine succor.

Honour concerns the material blessings, while virtue relates to spiritual blessings.

In conclusion, traveling is one of the necessities of human life for meeting his needs and acquiring of experiences, which the Lord has provided for man in land and at sea, calling it as one of His graces.

Then, there are the 'good things' which are of several kinds: The 'clean life', the 'clean offspring', the 'clean sustenance'.

Imam Baqir (as) says:

"The clean sustenance is the same useful knowledge." [19]

1. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 50
2. Surah Ash-Shu'ar a, No. 26, verse 95
3. Surah 'Isr a', No. 17, verse 64
4. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 18, verse 12
5. Tafsir-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
6. Bihar, vol. 101, p. 136
7. Kafi, vol. 5, p. 502

8. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 99
9. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 201
10. Bihar, vol. 63, p. 268
11. N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 188
12. Surah Al-Hujur at, No. 49, verse 13
13. Surah At-Teen, No. 99, verse 4
14. Surah Al-Hujur at, No. 95, verse 5
15. Surah Al-Jumu'ah, No. 62, verse 5
16. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 176
17. Ibid, verse 179
18. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 74
19. Tafsir-Kanz-uld-Daqayiq

Section 8: Every People Will Be Summoned with Their Own Imam

Surah Isra' – Verse 71

يَوْمَ نَدْعُواْ كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُوْلَئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلاَ يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلاً

71. "On the Day We shall call every people with their Imam (leader); then whoever is given his book in his right hand; then these will read their book (joyfully); and they will not be treated unjustly in the least.

This holy verse makes allusions to one of the other Divine blessings given to man, and then it refers to the heavy responsibilities which run parallel to these blessings and are upon him. At first, the Holy Qur'an points to the 'issue of leadership' and its role in the course of human destiny, implying that on the Hereafter Day He shall call each people along with their 'Imams' 'Leaders'.

The verse says:

"On the Day We shall call every people with their Imam (leader)..."

That is, those people who, in any age, accepted the call of their contemporary prophets and their emissaries, will be with their leaders, while those who bowed to the leadership of the Satan or the Imams of aberration or tyrannical rulers and pioneers, will be accompanied by them.

This exposition, while reflecting one of the means of the development of man, serves as a dire warning

to all the human beings that they should show maximum vigilance in the course of the selection of leaders, not allowing just anyone to take their lead.

The Role of Leadership in Islam

It is narrated in a famous quotation from Imam Baqir (as), that whenever he discussed upon the ‘principal pillars’ of Islam, he used to place the ‘leadership issue’ (Wilayah) as the fifth, and the most important of the pillars, while, placing the ‘daily prayers’, which is meant to establish one’s personal relationship with the Creator, and ‘fasting’, which is the secret of campaign against passions, and paying of the poor-dues (Zakat), which is a relationship of people with people, and, finally, ‘Hajj’, which relates to the social aspects of Islam, consist of the other four pillars.

The ‘Imam’ (as), then, goes on to say:

“Nothing is as important as the issue of leadership (Wilayah)”,

for the execution of other four principles depends, entirely, on the issue of leadership and can be realized solely in the light of this principle.

It is also for this reason that we have in another famous quotation from the Prophet (S) in a famous traditions he said:

“He who passes away without having an ‘Imam’, a ‘leader’, his death belongs to the category of ‘paganism’.”

There are numerous examples throughout history when a nation has gained the first row in the world in rank and position under the guidance of a great and an eligible leader, while, the same nation has suffered a devastating blow, and its eventual down fall has been brought about as a result of a weak and incapable leadership that may be beyond recognition.

In interpretation of this verse in Islamic sources, there are numerous quotations introduced, all of which enlighten thoroughly the meaning of the verse, indicating that the purpose of this verse is ‘Imamat’, ‘leadership’, as follows:

1) In an authentic documented tradition, quoted from Imam Ali-Ibn-MūsarRida (as) by Shi‘ah as well as Sunni sources, we read that, the ‘Imam’ (as), quoting from the prophet (S), narrated by his forefathers, upon the commentary of this verse, said:

“On that Day, every nation will be called along with its contemporary Imam, ‘leader’, and the Book of their Lord, as well as the course of practice of their prophet.” [1]

2) And, we have it also quoted by Imam Sadiq (as) saying:

“Do you not express your praise and gratitude to Allah? When the resurrection day comes, the Lord will call every nation along with the one whose leadership it has accepted. We will be called along with the Prophet (S) and you will be along with us. Where do you think you will be taken to then? By the Lord of Ka‘bah to Paradise.”

The Imam reiterated the last sentence three times.

3) Hadrat-i-Rida has said in a detailed tradition:

“The issue of ‘Imamat’ (leadership) exhibits the position of the prophets and is a heritage of the forerunners. It tackles with the issue of substitution of Allah and the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S) as well as the position of Amir-ul-Mu’mineen (as) along with the replacement by Imam Hassan, as well as Imam Hussayn (as).”

Then he said:

“The Imam introduces those issues which are as ‘allowed’ by Allah as they are, and the ones which are regarded ‘forbidden’ by the Lord as such.

The Imam seeks to establish the limits which are ordained by Allah and he defends the Lord’s religion, and invites (the people) to the path of Allah through wisdom, good admonitions, and self-explanatory proofs. And, finally, the Imam is the rein and head of the religion, order of Muslims, the benefit to the believers in the world and their glory.”

Again, he remarked:

“The ‘Imam’ is the flourishing root of Islam and the ‘prime branch’ of it. The ‘Imam’ is an honest friend, a kind and friendly father, a truly-loyal brother and a companion, just like an affectionate and honest mother towards her young child, and a refuge for Allah’s servants.”

Then, he said:

“The ‘Imam’ is the Lord’s trustee on the earth and among His people. He is the Lord’s proof for His servants and is His substitute in the cities. He calls (the people) to Allah and defends His sanctuaries.” 2

4) Quoting Ibn Abbas, Muj ahid says:

*“The Messenger of Allah (S) has remarked: ‘As the day of resurrection comes about, the Lord commands Gabriel to sit down at the gate of the Paradise, and do not let any one in unless he possesses the admission card and passage of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as)’.”*3

There are two types of leaders mentioned in the Qur’an. The first one includes the leaders of ‘light’ and ‘guidance’; while the latter comprises of leaders who lead to the Fire and misguidance. The second group compel people to follow their lead by force, threats, allurement, and humiliation.

5) Abū Basir once told Imam Sadiq (as):

“I witness that verily you are my Imam.”

The Imam replied:

“Every group will be mustered with their own Imam in the Hereafter.”[4]

6) And, again, the same Imam remarked:

“He who rejects or refuses to accept one of the living ‘Imams’, he has certainly rejected the ‘Imams’ (and ‘leaders’) of the past.” [5]

Incidentally, the issue of ‘Imamat’, (leadership) and ‘Wilayat’ (mastership) are the subject-core of life, and are within the context of one’s very life, and it is not to be regarded as a marginal or merely an ideological issue side-lined by others.

The issue of ‘leadership’ may make people either happy or wretched. Therefore, the result of selection of a leader and obedience to him is a burning one till the threshold of the Hereafter.

The Hereafter is not only the tribunal for individuals, but it is also the great court set-up for nations, peoples, parties, schools of thought, and for governments.

Then, the verse implies that the people will be categorized into two different groups in the doomsday. Those whose record of deeds is delivered to their right hand, and this is done with their pride, joy, and pleasure when they read it joyfully, and no cruelty is done to them.

And, he, who has not found a way to be saved in the world and who has not been led well, he will not seek his way out into the Paradise in the hereafter.

The verse says:

“...then whoever is given his book in his right hand; then these will read their book (joyfully)...”

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the Arabic term /fati/ signifies a thin noodle which is spilt within a date-stone and which here implies an ‘insignificant’ amount.

Therefore, the chastisement in the resurrection day is a hundred percent just and fair, for, on that Day one receives punishment and reward commensurate with his amount of sin or decent act he has undertaken to perform, even it is very insignificant.

The verse says:

“...and they will not be treated unjustly in the least.”

Surah Isra' – Verse 72

وَمَن كَانَ فِي هذِهِ أَعْمَي فَهُوَ فِي الآخِرَةِ أَعْمَي وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلاً

72. "And, whoever is blind in this (life), he will (also) be blind in the Hereafter and (even) more erring from the way."

Those who have turned a blind eye to the face of the truth in this world, will be likewise and even more misled in the Hereafter.

They will neither be led in this world to the way of guidance, nor do they find the way to Heaven and prosperity in Hereafter, for they have turned a blind eye to all the realities, thus they have deprived themselves from all of the blessings which the Lord had bestowed upon them.

As the world Hereafter is a grand reflection of this world, it would by no means be astonishing to find that such blind-folded people enter the doomsday scene in their like manner.

The verse says:

"And, whoever is blind in this (life), he will (also) be blind in the Hereafter and (even) more erring from the way."

Explanations

In addition to those who rise up from death as deaf and dumb in the resurrection day, there will also be seen scenes where people are as blind, which case has its roots in their ' inwardly blindness' in this world.

Some Islamic quotations denote that whoever is required to go on a 'Hajj pilgrimage' but he does not perform the ceremonies on site, or he who reads the Qur'an but he does not practice accordingly, will be mustered blind in Hereafter.[6]

Being inwardly blind is a worse situation than being a really blind by eyes. As Hadrat Ali (as) remarks:

"The worst kind of blindness, is the blindness at heart."

He (as) has also stated:

"The worst (and the hardest form) of blindness is (when) someone is blind unto our excellence."[7]

Cases of blindness on the resurrection day, have also been reiterated in other verses as well, among which one may refer to verse 97, of the Surah 'Isra' which says:

"We shall muster them on the Day of Resurrection upon their faces, blind, dumb, and deaf whose dwelling shall be Hell…".

And again verse 125 of Surah TaHa, No. 20, indicates the rising blind from the dead on the resurrection day as the consequence of being inwardly blind and neglectful to the Divine verses in this world and turning away form accepting the truth.

Imam Baqir (as) remarks:

"Whoever does not acquire the true spiritual benefit by witnessing the creation, is far worse blinded in the Hereafter which he has not witnessed." 8

Question: We have it in some verses that on Hereafter Day the sinners are commanded to read their record. How would that be feasible and compatible despite such verses with regard to their conditions of blindness?

Answer: Their case of blindness is confined to one of the passing stages of the resurrection day; they will regain their eye-sight in other phases, witnessing clearly those cases and facts which they have failed to grasp in the world.

Surah Isra' – Verse 73

وَإِن كَادُوا لَيَفْتِنُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ لِتَفْتَرِيَ عَلَيْنَا غَيْرَهُ وَإِذاً لاَتَّخَذُوكَ خَلِيلاً

73. "And verily they were about to tempt you away from what We revealed to you so that you would ascribe against Us other than that, and then they would certainly have taken you as a friend."

Referring to the issues involved in previous holy verses regarding paganism and the pagans, here, He issues a dire warning to the blissful Prophet (S) to be on his guard against this group and their temptations, lest the slightest weakness permeates his beliefs in his campaign against paganism and idolatry, which are to be ensued decisively to the end.

The verse says:

"And verily they were about to tempt you away from what We revealed to you so that you would ascribe against Us other than that, and then they would certainly have taken you as a friend."

In some quotations, we read that the pagans wanted the Prophet (S) to pay his respect to the idols or they asked for a one-year respite for their pursuit of their worship of the idols, in which case, the prophet (S) was about to condescend to their request.

However, the Almighty protected him. Nevertheless, such quotations are discarded and they are incompatible with the principle of infallibility and decisiveness of the Prophet (S) which has been mentioned in other verses of the Qur'an and which is his usual course in his life.[9]

The author of Tafsir Atyab–ul–Bayan states that: As we have it in the verse: /'an–il–la�i 'auhayn a/

"***...from what We revealed...***"

instead of /'amm a 'auhayn a/, this indicates that attempts made by the pagans for changing the view of the Prophet (S), relates to his diversion of attention from a particular person and not to the revealed matters. However, who has it been the fellow whom Allah has sent His revelations about?

There is a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir and Imam Kazim (as) concerning the issue of 'Wilayat' (Succession) of Hadrat Ali (as), in which, the Lord has made certain recommendations to the Prophet (S) through revelations.

The Lord has revealed this verse in order to make the Prophet (S) remain heedless of the jealousy of the people and their rejection as well as their intolerant attitudes, and to invalidate the attempts of the pagans for making the Prophet (S) exceed the limits.

Surah Isra' – Verses 74 – 75

وَلَوْلاَ أَن ثَبَّتْنَاكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئاً قَلِيلاً

إِذاً لأَذَقْنَاكَ ضِعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضِعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ ثُمَّ لاَ تَجِدُ لَكَ عَلَيْنَا نَصِيراً

74. "And had it not been that We had established you already, you would certainly have been near to incline towards them a little."
75. "In that case, We would certainly have made you taste a double (punishment) in this life and a double (punishment) after death, then you would not have found any helper for you against Us."

If such were not the case that We had protected you by bestowing upon you the power of infallibility and of Our grace, you were almost about to approach them, showing your inclination, thus putting into practice some of their wishes.

The verse says:

"And had it not been that We had established you already, you would certainly have been near to incline towards them a little."

In such a case, We would make you taste twice the penalty of the world and the Hereafter. That is,

whatever amount of punishment We have procured for the sinners in this world and in the hereafter, and after their death, We would similarly double it for you.

This statement provides justifications for the evil and grand nature of the sin as well as that of the position of the sinner. That is, the greater the position of the sinner, the greater the sin and, hence, the greater its punishment would be.

The verse says:

"In that case, We would certainly have made you taste a double (punishment) in this life and a double (punishment) after death, then you would not have found any helper for you against Us."

Imam Rida (as) and Ibn Abbas have both been quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) enjoyed the '*position of infallibility*' and was *'immune against all sins'*[10].

Nevertheless, this verse, which is addressed to the Prophet (S), aims at dissuading the faithful from showing the slightest inclination towards the pagans in all commandments of Allah.

In the meantime, this verse is not incompatible in any way with the Prophet's (S) infallibility.

The sentence,

"you would certainly have been near to incline toward them"

does not imply committing sin.

Moreover, the sentence:

"...Had We not established...",

is conditional. That is, if We had not provided protection, perhaps you were going to be inclined. However, as that protection was provided that inclination was non-existent.

In other cases also conditionality 'if' does not imply decisiveness in fulfilling the action, as in verses 44 to 46 of Surah Al-Haqqah which mean if he falsely attributes, We cut off his main vein.

Other similar case includes verse 65 of Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39 which says:

"...surely if you associate (with Allah), your work will certainly come to naught..."

which implies that the act has not been performed.

Thus, the slightest backing down from divine principals and values is not allowed, since that will be regarded as a victory for the enemies.

In Islamic sources, we read:

“When the above three verses were revealed, the Prophet (S) invoked:

“O’ Lord! Do not leave me on my own even within the space of one blinking of eyes!”

This very meaningful prayer of the Prophet (S) provides an important lesson for all of us, showing that all must seek refuge to Allah and rely on His grace while one notes that even ‘Immaculate prophets’ have not been able to resist slipping and stumbling, much less in our case in face of all satanical temptations.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 76

وَإِن كَادُوا لَيَسْتَفِزُّونَكَ مِنَ الاَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكَ مِنْهَا وإِذاً لاَّ يَلْبَثُونَ خِلاَفَكَ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً

76. “And verily they were about to startling you from the land so as to expel you from it; and then, they would not have tarried after you but a little.”

It is said that this verse and the following one have been revealed about the people of Mecca who gathered and decided to expel the Prophet (S) from Mecca.

After that, this decision was seconded and changed into the verdict for the execution of the Prophet (S) in Mecca, then the house of the Prophet (S) was surrounded in all directions. As we know the Prophet (S) was miraculously saved and started to Medina, which marks the beginning of Hijrah (the Exodus).

In the previous verses, of course, we noted that the pagans wanted to influence the prophet (S), making him deviate from the right path, when Allah’s grace came to his help, disrupting their plans.

But, following that, they embraced on a new plan to thwart his call. They planned to oust him to a distant spot which was out of reach. This plan was also thwarted.

The verse says:

“And verily they were about to startling you from the land so as to expel you from it…”

The noble verse implies that you were about to be ousted skillfully according to their well-calculated plan from this land.

Then the Qur’an issues a dire warning to them meaning that if they succeeded they would have entangled themselves in a severe Divine punishment. Thus, they would not remain there much longer after you.

The verse says:

“...and then, they would not have tarried after you but a little.”

For this was a very great sin, whereby people might seek to oust and expel their compassionate leader and their savior from their city, thereby, showing their ungratefulness towards the greatest blessing of Allah.

Such a people are not entitled to live and a devastating penalty would, therefore, call on them. This event happened for soon, after a short time, in the ‘Battle of Badr’, many of them were killed, while a few of them were able to escape or to embrace the faith.

Thus, one notes that the mere presence of the Prophet (S) among the people may obstruct the Divine punishment. In case they oust him from amongst themselves, or distance him, they are certain to perish instantly.

The blissful Qur’an does two things simultaneously. While it informs us about the invisible world, it also provides the Prophet (S) with information with respect to the frustrations and failures of the conspiracies of his enemies, hence, condoling him.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 77

سُنَّةَ مَن قَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَا وَلاَ تَجِدُ لِسُنَّتِنَا تَحْوِيلاً

*77. “(**This was Our**) **way with those of Our messengers whom We sent before you, and you shall not find any change in Our way.**”*

Providing support for the prophets as well as extermination of the pagans and oppressors, have been among the courses of treatment of the Lord.

It has been mentioned in verse 13, of Surah ‘Ibrahim, saying:

“And those who disbelieved told their Messengers: ‘We will certainly expel you from our land, or else you return to our creed.’ Then their Lord revealed to them: ‘Certainly We will perish the unjust’.”

Therefore, He announces that this punishment is not solely exclusive to the Arab pagans; this procedure of Ours has been in action with regard to the prophets who were sent before you as well, and no changes have taken place with regard to this course of action.

The verse says:

*“(**This was Our**) **way with those of Our messengers whom We sent before you, and you shall not find any change in Our way.**”*

This course of action stems from a clear source of logic, whereby, such an ungrateful people who break up their source of guiding light they, in fact, ruin their own safeguard fortresses.

Certainly such a nation is not worthy of the Divine grace, and they will be encompassed by the due chastisement. We know that the Lord does not discriminate unjustly between his servants, and He gives similar punishments for equal set of acts in equal conditions. And, such is the significance of unchanged ability of Allah's way of treatment.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayan and Safi
2. Tuhaf-ul-'Uqul, and 'Athar-ul-Sadiqin, Harf-ul-Alaf
3. Manaqib Ibn Maqazili, p. 131
4. Tafsir N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
5. Bihar, vol. 23, p. 95 and 'Ikm al-ud-Din
6. Tafsir Kanz-ud-Daqayiq
7. Tafsir Kanz-ud-Daqayiq
8. Tauhid Sad�q
9. Tafsir Al-Mizan
10. Jamaul Jam'a, Tafsir Safi

Section 9: Times of Prayer and the Midnight Prayer

Surah Isra' – Verse 78

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَي غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُوداً

78. "Perform the prayer (rituals) from the declension of the sun till the darkness of the night, and the recitation (of prayer) at the morn, verily the recitation (of prayer) at the morn is witnessed (by the angels)."

Pursuing the previous verses which concentrated on the issues of monotheism and paganism and, later, discussed the conspiracies, plots and temptations of the pagans, in this verse the Qur'an deals with such issues as prayers and the focusing of one's attention on the Lord, which serves as an effective means for campaigning against paganism, as well as a means for expelling the satanical temptations from one's heart and soul.

Undoubtedly, it is the prayer which makes man remember the Lord, wiping away the dust of sin from him all over and expelling the satanical temptations from him.

The verse, at first, says:

“Perform the prayer (***rituals***) ***from the declension of the sun till the darkness of the night, and the recitation*** (***of prayer***) ***at the morn, verily the recitation*** (***of prayer***) ***at the morn is witnessed*** (***by the angels***)*.”*

The declining time of the sun signifies the declining or fading away of the sunshine from the meridian circle which is the noon-time on.

The Arabic term /dul�k/ is derived originally from the term /dalaka/, meaning ‘rubbing’, for, at that time, and in sunny lands in particular, man usually tends to rub his eyes because of the strength of the sunshine.

Or, it might be derived from the Arabic term /dalk/, meaning becoming inclined, for the sun, at this time, becomes inclined from the meridian circle towards the west. It might also signify the fact that man tends to guard off against the sunshine by keeping his hand between his eyes and the sunshine as if he removes its lights from his eyes, thus reclining it.

Anyway, according to the quotations received from the sources of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), the Qur’anic term /dul�k/, mentioned in this verse, has been commented upon as signifying the ‘declining of the sun’.

A quotation from Imam Sadiq (as) indicates that ‘Ubayd-Ibn-i-Zararah questioned the Imam (as) as to the comments of this holy verse, who answered:

“The Almighty has enjoined Muslims to establish four prayers, the beginning of which starts at the declining of the sun, ‘at moon’, and which ends at ‘midnight’.” [1]

In another quotation, we have it from Imam Baqir (as) in the commentary upon this very verse when asked by Zar arah, the great Shi‘ite traditionist, he (as) answered:

“The declining of the sun signifies its fading away (*from the meridian circle*)*, and the Arabic phrase /qasaq-ul-layl/ denotes ‘midnight’. These are the four set of prayers which the Prophet* (*S*) *designated for people, confirming the time, and the Qur’anic phrase /Qur’an-ul-fajr/ refers to the morning prayer.”*[2]

Certainly, some commentators have offered other probable hypotheses with regard to the meaning of /dul�k/ which cannot be considered as remarkable.

As for the meaning of the Arabic phrase /qusaq-ul-layl/, one might claim that as the term /qasaq/ signifies the intensive darkness of the night, and such a darkness reaches its peak at midnight, and is utmost in its density, this phrase altogether signifies ‘midnight’.

The Arabic term ‘Qur’an’ refers to that which is ‘read’ and the phrase /Qur’an-ul-fajr/, altogether refers to the ‘prayer at dawn’.

It is for this reason that the above verse is among the ones which briefly refer to the five-time daily prayers and, alongside with the other verses regarding the prayer times, as well as the numerous quotations received in this connection, the five times for daily prayers are exactly distinguished.

Certainly, one must keep in mind the fact that some of the verses of the Qur'an refer to one prayer only, like:

"Guard your prayers, and (especially) the middle prayer..."[3]

in which case, the 'middle prayer', according to the authentic commentaries, is that same '***midday prayer***'.

Occasionally, those verses allude to the three times for prayers out of the five-time daily prayers, like:

"And establish the prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night..."[4]

in which case, /tarafay-in-nah ar/ makes allusions to the morning and evening (Maqrib) prayers, and the phrase /zulafan min-al-layl/ alludes to the night prayer ('Isha' prayer).

At times, all of the five-time prayers are briefly referred to, as in the verse in question. (We have already explained in minute details in this connection in commentary, upon verse 114 of Surah H�d, No. 11)

At any rate, undoubtedly the details as for the five-times daily prayers have not been explained in full in these verses; on the contrary, as is the case with other Islamic commandments, the explanations are confined to the general rules, and their fuller explanations are left to the practice of the Prophet (S) and the true Imams.

Another point which remains outstanding in here is that the above verse says that the 'morning prayer is being witnessed'. Now this question arises as by whom is it being witnessed?

According to the Islamic quotations received through the commentaries upon this verse suggest that '*They are witnessed by both the angels of night and day*', for, '*night angels*', who are on guard by night, are replaced by day angels at dawn and as morning prayer is performed at dawn, both groups of angels observe and bear testimony to that.

These quotations are quoted by both the Shi'ah and Sunni scholars, among whom, (according to Tafsir-R�h-ul-Ma'ani), Ahmad and Nisa'i, Ibn Majid, Tarmuzi, and Hakim have quoted the Prophet (S) who stated in his commentary upon this sentence:

"Both the day and the night angels watch him[5]*."*

The famous scholars of Hadith of the Sunnis, Bukh ari and Muslim have also quoted this meaning in their 'Sahih'.

For further information regarding the traditions of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) upon this meaning refer to Tafsir-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, under the verse in question.

The transparency provided in this commentary explains that the best time for performing the morning prayer rituals is the moments coinciding with the onset of the dawn.

Surah Isra' – Verse 79

وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَي أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَاماً مَّحمُوداً

79. "And some part of the night keep vigil for it as an additional prayer for you; maybe that your Lord will raise you up to a praised position."

Pursuing the aforegoing theme of the five-time compulsory daily prayers, the Qur'an adds as follows:

"And some part of the night keep vigil for it..."

The well-known Islamic commentators regard these holy words as allusions made to 'the supererogation of the night' when quotations are innumerable as to their virtues, though the holy verse does not explicitly refer to it as such. Nevertheless, considering all the circumstantial evidences which are usually available, this interpretation seems transparent.

Then the Qur'an implies that this is an additional program. In addition to the compulsory daily prayers this schedule has also been designated for you.

The verse says:

"...as an additional prayer for you..."

There are many who believe that this sentence provides evidence as to the fact that 'night prayers' were required for the Prophet (S) for the Arabic term /Nafilah/ meaning, 'intensive', alludes to the fact that this additional obligation is required of the Prophet (S).

Others claim that 'night prayers' were required to be performed by the Prophet (S) long before this occasion, in reference to the verses of Surah Al-Muzzamil. Later on, the above verse has discarded that obligation, thus making it into a 'recommended' act instead of an 'obligatory' one.

At any rate, the Qur'an concludes this spiritual and heart-transforming Divine program as: Maybe in the light of this act, the Lord elevates you in rank to the position of the 'eligible' and 'well-praised' one.

The verse continues saying:

"...maybe that your Lord will raise you up to a praised position."

There is no doubt that such a position is an outstanding one which is praiseworthy, because this Qur'anic term is expressed in absolute case. Probably, this is a reference made to the fact that you are being praised universally from the time immemorial to the end.

Islamic quotations, whether those of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) as well as those quoted by the Sunni scholars have regarded the 'eligible' or 'praiseworthy' rank as a position for 'the Great Intercession', since the Prophet (S) is the greatest of the intercessors in the Hereafter. Those who merit this intercession will be covered by such an act of the Great Intercession.

Surah Isra' – Verse 80

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَدْخِلْنِي مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِي مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَاجْعَل لِي مِن لَدُنكَ سُلْطَاناً نَصِيراً

80. "And say: 'My Lord! cause me to enter a goodly entrance and cause me to go out (of) a goodly exit, and grant me from Your part a (powerful) authority to assist (me)'."

This verse alludes to one of the fundamental commandments of Islam which has its roots in the spirit of faith and monotheism. One should ask the Lord to enable him to initiate every job in an honest way.

The verse says:

"And say: 'My Lord! cause me to enter a goodly entrance..."

Let us not initiate any individual or social act without honesty and sincerity, and, at the same time, let us not end any program except in a truthful manner. Honesty and sincerity as well as righteousness and keeping of others belongings must be our principal line to follow in all works and we begin and end everything with them.

The verse continues saying:

"...and cause me to go out (of) a goodly exit..."

Some of the commentators have occasionally attempted to confine the broad meaning of this verse to certain limited cases and examples, such as the entrance and arrival at Medina and the departure from it for destination to Mecca; or one's entrance to the grave and one's exit from it on the Resurrection Day, or so forth, but it is quite obvious that the above comprehensive interpretation is not in any way confined to limited cases; rather, it is concerned with the initiation of all kinds of decent activities in an honest manner and its eventual termination in everything, every job and every schedule.

In fact, the main reason for one's success lies in this very point and the Divinely-selected prophets and men of Allah have also followed this very same course of action that their thoughts, words, and deeds

have been clean of all frauds, defaults and tricks and distanced from whatever is contrary to the truth and honesty.

In principle, most of the misfortunes, which we witness with our own eyes nowadays, and which entangle individuals and groups as well as nations, have their roots in deviation from this very point.

Their very job is occasionally based on falsehood, fraud and malevolence, and, at times, when they initiate their acts with honesty, they often do not keep to their principle to the end which causes their failure.

The second principle which, from one point of view, is the outcome of monotheism, and from another point of view, is the fruit of the honest initiation and ending of every job. This is that very thing which is referred to at the end of the verse.

It says:

"...and grant me from Your part a (***powerful***) ***authority to assist*** (***me***)***'."***

For, I am lonely and one cannot do any job by himself! I shall not succeed, in any way, in my difficulties just by reliance on my own power! Assist me, and designate some assisting individuals for me.

Provide me with a powerful reasoning; unequivocal, challenging proofs against my foes, devoted friends, a strong will, an illuminated mind, a sound reason all of which will serve me and come to my aid and, certainly, no one else but You are to provide me with these.

Surah Isra' – Verse 81

وَقُلْ جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقاً

81. "And say: 'The truth has come and the 'falsehood' has vanished away; verily, the 'falsehood' is (***something***) ***vanishing'."***

The 'Truth' is one of the names of the Lord which is in the sense of 'constant and everlasting'. Therefore, the Lord and whatever emanates from Him is identical with the truth.

The Arabic term /zah�q/, mentioned here, signifies 'going away'. The phrase /zahaqa nafsah�/ means that 'the soul went out of his body'.

The verse says:

"And say: 'The truth has come and the 'falsehood' has vanished away; verily, the 'falsehood' is (***something***) ***vanishing'."***

There are many extensions cited for this verse, such as: the emergence of Islam, arrival at Medina, the conquest of Mecca, and the breaking of the idols, in all of the cases of which, the ‘untruth’ has met with its own destruction. However, the verse has got a broader meaning which provides us with a sense of the destruction of the ‘untruth’ as well as the survival of the truth.

As in pursuance of ‘honesty’ and ‘trust’ which have been referred to in the previous verse, hoping for a decisive victory is another cause for success. The Lord tells His Prophet in the last verse in question to say that the truth has come and the untruth will vanish away.

In principle, it is within the inherent nature of the untruth to be perishable. So, as it was said, the Arabic term /zahaqa/ is derived from /zah�q/, rhyming in weight with the Arabic term /qab�l/ and also equal in syllables, means extermination and, because of its form of exaggeration, it expresses the utmost condition, signifying something which is perishable in its entirety.

The ‘untruth’ has got a certain period of maneuvering, though that period will not last long, and, eventually, the victory will be forth coming for the advocates and followers of the truth.

Explanations

1. ‘Night prayers’ are great spiritual worshipping acts. The tumult of daily life may attract the attention of every one, taking his imagination to the extremes of various points in such a way that one’s mind is rarely at ease, and his thoughts collected with his heart are not fully placed in order.

However, in the midst of night and before dawn, when the fuss of material life is pretty well-settled, and one’s a little amount of asleep has put one’s soul and body in order, man feels a unique sense of being refreshed all over.

Certainly, in this calm sort of situation, away from all kinds of hypocrisy, bigotry, egoism, and coupled with one’s heartily attention, one is certain to focus in such a way his attention which is extremely reinforcing for his heart and tends to bring forth stages in the process of perfection.

It is for this reason that the ‘friends of Allah’ have always strengthened themselves, through their end-of-the night prayers, with the purging of their souls, reinforcement of their heart and of their will, and complementing of their sincerity.

At the dawn of Islam, the Prophet (S), too, sought to develop the spiritual programming of the Muslims, elevating their personality so much that as if they were no more their own former ‘selves’.

That is, he created ‘new men’ out of their former selves: decisive, brave, faithful, clean and sincere, and, perhaps, ‘the praised position’, which is alluded to in the former verses, might be so owing to this reason.

A survey of the quotations in the Islamic sources regarding the virtues of the ‘night prayers’, makes the

issue more transparent. The following quotations are as some examples:

1. The Prophet (S) says:

"The best among you are the ones who are polite in their speech; who feed the hungry; and who perform prayers deep into the night, when all people are asleep."[6]

2. Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) says:

"Getting up at night for prayers will enhance one's health of body, will please Allah, Almighly and Glorious, and will attract His favour, and, finally, will (enable one to) follow in the ethical course of the prophets." [7]

3. Imam Sadiq (as) told one of his disciples:

"Never stop getting up at night for prayers; he who is deprived of the getting up at night for prayers and for worship, is the one who is aggrieved."

4. The Messenger of Allah (S) says:

"He who performs 'the night prayers', his face (as well as his soul) will turn good on the following day."

Even, we have it in some quotations that such acts of worship are so important that no one else, except the 'pure' and the 'righteous' can achieve it with success.

5. A man, calling on Amir-ul-Mo'mineen Ali (as), said:

"I was deprived from performing the night prayers."

Ali (as) answered:

"You are the one whose sins have held him captive." [8]

6. In another quotation from Imam Sadiq (as), we read:

"Man sometimes tells lies and this causes him to be deprived of the night prayers. Once, he is deprived in such a manner, he would also be deprived from sustenance, (the material and spiritual blessing which will ensue)." [9]

7. Notwithstanding we know that such a person like Ali (as) never gave up the night prayers, the core of the importance of the matter is such that the Prophet (S) recommended to him in his testament as:

"I am recommending you to perform certain acts; keep them well in mind."

Then he said:

“O’ Lord: Assist him in performing these duties.”

Then he went as far as saying:

“Never keep away or forget about the night prayers! Never keep away or forget about the night prayers!” [10]

8. The Prophet of Islam (S) told Gabriel:

“Give me some pieces of advice”

Gabriel said:

“‘O’ Muhammad! Go on living as long as you may, but beware that you will eventually die; love whatever you wish to, but let it be known to you that you will finally separate from it (your object of love)!

Perform every kind of act which pleases you, but do know that you will get the end-result of your action. And, finally, beware that a believer is honored by having his night prayers performed, while, his glory rests with abstinence from damaging the reputation of other people.”[11]

Such heavenly pieces of advice of Gabriel, which are all well-calculated, exhibit the fact that the prayers performed in the depth of the night alter and shape one’s personality, education, spirituality and faith to such an extent that it would serve as one’s source of prestige and honor as would be the case with abstinence from causing harms to other people, which by itself, will be one’s source of pride.

9. Imam Sadiq (as) states:

“There are three points which serve as (a source of) pride for the believers and would be as an ornamental gift in this world and the next: Prayers in the depth of the night, being heedless of what is in the hands of other people, and, ‘the Wilayat’, (love and leadership) of the Imam from among the progeny of the Prophet (S). [12]

10. That ‘Imam’ has also been quoted as saying:

“Whatever of good acts performed by a believer has been mentioned with its reward explicitly in the Qur’an, except that of the night prayers which Allah has not mentioned in a transparent way because of the extraordinary importance of it. He has only stated that:

‘They forsake their beds of sleep, the while they call on their Lord in fear and hope. And they spend (in charity) out of the sustenance which We have bestowed on them.’[13]

Nonetheless, no one knows as to what kind of reward Allah has in mind for their remuneration for their acts which causes their eyes to be enlightened.”[14]

11. The highly-esteemed Prophet of Islam (S) has said:

“The best of the prayers, next to the compulsory prayers, are the ones (*which one performs*) *deep into the night.”* [15]

12. The blissful Prophet (S) said:

“The two-unit-prayer which the child of Adam performs in the midst of late night is better for him than the world and what is in it. Were it not causing difficulties for my herd ‘people’, certainly I would have made it compulsory for them (*to perform*)*.”*[16]

13. Imam Rida (as) has said:

“Beware of the late-night prayers! There is no servant, who gets up late of night and does perform prayers in eight units, and Shaf‘ prayer into two units, and the ‘Watr’ prayer in one unit, seeking forgiveness of Allah seventy times in his ‘Qunūt’, save that Allah will spare him the chastisement of the grave and that of the Fire, prolong his lifetime for him, and will provide a wider range of means in his sustenance.”

Afterwards, the Imam (as) said:

“Verily the houses in which such night prayers are performed their light will illuminate for the residents of heaven in the same manner that the starts shine and shed light for the inhabitants of the earth.”[17]

14. The blissful Prophet said:

“The late-night prayers will serve as a pleasant source for the Lord, the friendship of the angels, the practice of the prophets, the light of the gnosis (*of Allah*)*, the roots of faith, a cause for providing calmness of the body, provoking the disgust of the Satan, spearheading against the foes, a means of acceptance for one’s invocation, acceptance of one’s deeds, and blessings for one’s means of sustenance.*

The late-night prayers also serve as an intercessor between the performer of the prayers and the Angel of Death, as a light for his grave, as a carpet under him, as a respondent for the ‘Nakir and Munkar’, an associate and a visitor for man deep in his grave till the Day of Resurrection.”[18]

15. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“When a man commits sin, he will be deprived of performing his late-night prayers. Truly, an evil act, ‘a sin’, serves as a sharper means on the person involved than a knife cutting meat.”[19]

16. The blissful Prophet (S) said:

“When a person gets up from his pleasure-providing bed while he has got his eyes full of sleep, in order

to please his Lord, Glory be to His Mighty, by his late-night prayers, the Lord takes pride by it to the angels: saying:

'Do you not watch this My servant, who has got up from his pleasant bed to perform the prayers which I have not compelled him to do? Do bear witness that, verily, I have pardoned him'."[20]

17. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"There is no good that a servant does but there has been stated a reward for it in the Qur'an, except for late-night prayers which Allah has not defined its reward because of its importance with Him."[21]

18. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"He has told a lie who thinks he will starve in spite of having performed late-night prayers, for verily the late-night prayers guarantee the means of sustenance of the day."[22]

Certainly, such prayers have got their own many manners. We shall but present their simplest form in here so that the admirers of such a spiritual act can benefit further from it. The late-night prayers have got 11 units which are divided into three sections as follows:

a) Four set of prayers each divided into two units, which total 8 units, called: 'Nafilah' (supererogation) of the night.

b) One set of prayers, consisting of two units which is called 'Nafilah Shaf'. (even supererogation).

c) One set of prayers, consisting of one unit which is called 'Nafilah Watr'. The rituals of which are just the same as the morning prayers though there are no 'prayer call' and Iqamah. (The declaration of prayer). When the Watr prayer is being performed, the longer the Qun[illegible]t the better.

What is a Praised Position?

As it is obvious from its apparent form, the position of the 'highly praised one' has got an extensive meaning which includes every type of high position and rank which is worthy and eligible for appraisal, though, certainly here, it refers to the outstanding and extraordinary place which has been attained by the Prophet (S), as a result of his nightly vigilance for worshipping and praying.

As was said earlier, this rank, the Praised Position, according to the commentators, is widely known to be the position of 'the Great Intercession' of the Prophet (S).

This comment has been introduced in numerous quotations as well. In 'Ayyashi's commentaries, we have it quoted from Imam Baqir (as) or Imam Sadiq (as) who, commenting on the last sentence of verse 79 from the current Surah said:

"It is intercession."

Some commentators have sought to infer this fact from the very meaning of the verse. They are of the opinion that the Qur'anic sentence: /'as a 'an yab'aaka/provides justification as to the fact that such a position 'will be accorded to you by Allah in the future'.

This is a rank which will be the object of universal appreciation, for it will be of benefit to the whole people, (for the Qur'anic term /mahm□d/ 'highly praised', mentioned in the above sentence, refers to the absolute sense of the word and is not subject to any kind of conditions).

Moreover, praise and glory takes place in the case of a voluntary action, and that which embraces all of these worthy attributes, can be nothing else but the 'universal intercession' of the Prophet (S).[23]

This is also probable that the 'highly praised position' is the utmost proximity towards the Lord, one of the consequences of which embraces the 'Great Intercession'.

The addressee in this holy verse is apparently the Prophet (S), yet, from one point of view, one may generalize the verdict to include all those believing individuals who perform the Divine spiritual program of reciting the late-night prayers, saying they, too, will have a share of the 'praised position', and will find their way for proximity towards the Lord's sanctuary as a result of and just to their depth of faith and their practices.

They will be able, then, to intercede and assist the wretched people with the same scale, for we know that every believer will enjoy this rank of intercession, by the leave of Allah, according to the amount of his faith, though the brilliant and utmost complete example of this verse is the very Prophet (S) himself.

3: Three Factors underlying Success: It is usual with respect to the campaign of the truth against 'the untruth', that the latter excels the former in number and in power, while, the former, despite its lack of resources, and number, enjoys eye-catching victories.

The examples of such cases are witnessed over and again in the Islamic Wars of Badr and 'Ahz ab as well as in Hunayn and the like. In our contemporary world, we also notice the conquest by oppressed nations over the oppressor powers. This is because the advocates of the truth enjoy specific spiritual powers which sometimes turn one 'man' into one 'nation'.

We have noted allusions made to the three factors leading to victory in the above-mentioned verses; the factors from which the contemporary Muslims have distanced themselves and therefore, they witness successive defeats at the hands of their opponents.

These three factors consist of: honest and sincere initiation in the course of actions as well as the pursuit of such a course through to the end.

Reliance upon the power of the Lord, self-reliance, and renouncement from every sort of reliance on others are other factors.

Thus, no policies can prove more efficient than honesty and sincerity in the course of action, and no point of reference and support can be worthier than that of independence, negation of interdependence, and trust in Allah.

How can on earth the Muslims drive their present enemies out of their occupied and usurped lands, who are looting and plundering their resources, while they are heavily dependent on them militarily, economically and politically?

Can we ever overcome our enemies by using those same weapons which we have bought form them? What a stupid idea!

4: The Truth will Prevail and the 'Untruth' will Die out. We encounter one more general and fundamental principle as well as one everlasting Allah's way of treatment in the previous verses, which provide us with a source of hope for all the truth-seeking individuals which pinpoints to the ultimate victory of the truth and the right over 'the wrong' and which drives out the 'wrong' in its entirety.

The 'wrong' has got a certain period of prosperity and strength; it initiates blasting temporarily; it shows itself off though its life cycle is short and limited, and its eventual destiny is annihilation. Or, according to the Qur'an, like foam on water, it winks, making a fuss, and dies out, and water, which provides life, will prevail.[24]

The reason for such a case is hidden in the word 'untruth' itself, for it is that kind of thing which is inconsistent with the world of creation and has got no share in actual reality and the truth.

'Untruth' is fabricated and artificial; it is fake, rootless, void from within, and, thus, those things which are normally in possession of such attributes cannot last long.

The truth-seeking individuals rely on the force of their faith, logic and keeping their words, the authenticity of their character, self-denials, and preparedness for sacrificing their lives as far as the point of martyrdom.

They are those who are enlightened in their hearts and fear no one but 'Allah', relying on no one else except Him, hence, this provides the clue to their victory.

5: This Verse, and the Uprising of Mahdi (as): In some quotations, the Qur'anic sentence:

"***The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished away***"

refers to the uprising of Hadrat Mahdi (as) as commented upon. Imam Baqir (as) said:

"The meaning of these Divine words is that: 'Once the living Imam (as) rises up, the fake administration will be up-rooted'."[25]

Certainly, the meaning of these traditions do not confine the significance of the extensive meaning of the

verse to this example only, but the uprising of Mahdi (as) is the most notable example of it, the eventuality of which consists of the ultimate victory of the truth over the untruth throughout the entire world.

We have it in the biography of the blissful Prophet (S) that on the day of the conquest of Mecca, he entered the 'Sacred Mosque', overthrowing 360 idols which were placed round the Ka'bah by the Arab tribes, and breaking them one after another by his stick, he was reciting this noble verse continuously.

Briefly speaking, this very Divine universal law, and this unequivocal law of creation, have got examples in every epoch.

The uprising of the Prophet (S) and his conquest over the army of paganism and idol-worshippers, as well as the uprising of Mahdi (as) (May our souls be sacrificed for him) against the tyrants and oppressors of the world are cases of the evident examples of depicting this universal law.

It is that same Divine law which provides the truth-seeking people with incentives as against the difficulties, making them more hopeful and strong in resistance, and they reinforce and refresh us in our Islamic efforts.

In the end of the verse, the Qur'an implies that Allah pounds the truth over the 'untruth', hence uprooting it, in which case, the untruth will perish. Thus, the truth must invade the untruth powerfully, pounding it.

It is in the Divine law and His way of treatment that the truth must survive and the wrong must perish and be wiped out, and this process must take place in actual fact and not in an incidental way or in imagination, though the quantitative number of the followers of the truth might be small and the number of the followers of the wrong might be great, for the truth, like water, will be prevalent and the wrong will be wiped out like the foam over the water.

Surah Isra' – Verse 82

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلاَ يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلاَّ خَسَاراً

82. "And We send down (stage by stage), of the Qur'an, that which is healing and mercy to the believers, and it adds not to the unjust except in loss."

The Qur'an, The Curing Prescription

As the previous noble verses, dealt with the issues of monotheism and the right of organizing campaigns against paganism and the wrong, this verse, takes up the issue of the extraordinary role of the Qur'an and its constructive impact with respect to this, saying:

“And We send down (stage by stage), of the Qur’an, that which is healing and mercy to the believers…”

The blissful Qur’an is a curing prescription for setting all in order and the betterment of the individuals and the society from all kinds of ethical and social diseases. The holy verse continues saying:

“…and it adds not to the unjust except in loss.”

Incidentally, the Arabic word /min/ does not imply in here ‘some’ which might substantiate the belief in the fact that ‘some parts of the Qur’an are healing’. Contrarily, it suggests that whatever is descended from the Qur’an is healing in itself.

Thus, the term /min/ is an explanatory statement; and, although the Qur’an is a guide for all; only those are provided with the light of its guidance who open the window of their soul to receive its revelations, alienating themselves from obstinacy and enmity and are ready to receive it with a sound mind.

Thus, the obstinate people, who have ill intentions, can gain nothing except additional disadvantage. It is like the rain, which, when falling on a swamp, makes stinking smell, though it is pure and clean in nature. Anyway, the reasoning of the Qur’an heals mental stagnation.

The admonition of the Qur’an treats well the callousness. The history of the Qur’an makes one disillusioned. Its beauty of harmony and its eloquence attracts the fleeing soul. Its ordinances and commands uproot superstitious beliefs, and its recitation and contemplation in it cure negligence. Recourse to it, cures bodily diseases, and its guidelines illuminate all kinds of darkness.

The Qur’anic healings make a difference when compared with material remedies. They do not have any side-effects and are not outdated. The Qur’anic remedies do not have any expiry date. He, who is cured by the Qur’an, will serve as a cause for curing others.

There are no errors or blunders in the prescription cure of the Qur’an. It is always readily available for all. The physician of this medicine not only knows us well but also loves us and, His prescription is for all ages. His prescription and drugs are not generic medicines to have duplicates.

Imam Ali (as) remarks:

“Verily the Qur’an consists a cure for the greatest ailments, namely unbelief, hypocrisy, revolt, and seductions.”[26]

The Qur’an is Allah’s words and the Lord’s Book. It is the Divine shining light, and the site of manifestation of Allah. It exhibits Allah’s way; it is the Divine firmly fitted bond, the Divine laws, the curing prescription and a sign of Allah’s favour to human beings.

It is a sign of the magnitude of Allah and His eternal miracle. It is the saving flag, a didactic book and an

instructive one, and an explicit statement. It is a book of glad tidings, warnings, monotheism, preaching, consciousness and ethics.

The Qur'an is a light without darkness, a guide without aberration, and an endless treasure. It is a book of knowledge, ordinances, history as well as historical analysis. It is a book of politics and administration, consciousness, reflection, and contemplation.

It is a book of peace and holy war, a book of the origin and the end. It is a book of faith and belief. The Qur'an is a company to man in the darkness of ignorance and a guiding leader for him in the labyrinths of life. The Qur'an is a book of measurement, justice, fairness, the truth, certainty, the right path, and the straight way.

It recounts the state of the past generations for the admonition of the future ones.

The Qur'an promises the righteous believers who practice it, salvation and victory, as well as glory and high esteem. It is a book of invitation, development, virtue, expediency, life and eternity. It is a book of the world of appearances and the innate world; a book of the worldly affairs and that of the Hereafter.

It is the book of nature as well as that of metaphysics; the book of the visible as well as that of the invisible; it is the book of Allah and of the people. It provides the examples of good deeds, decent acts, and persuading the people to perform what is good and of dissuading them from what is bad. It is instructive and, it provides credit.

The Qur'an shows the way of Paradise and dissuades one from taking the road to the Hell. It is the firmest path which Allah calls the people to. It is the book of religion and Allah's permanent ways of treatment. It is the Book of ethics, Gnosticism, Islamic jurisprudence and laws.

The Qur'an is the Book of eloquence, fluency, wisdom, and administration. The Qur'an is the Book of education for 'Man'. It shows the route to the world of spiritual realities. It is the companion to man in his loneliness and keeps him company when in a state of terror.

Certainly, tens of other topics only exhibit parts of the glory and depth of the instructions and the concepts of this Holy Book, which is an ever-lasting miracle of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Briefly speaking, this Divine Book and the Qur'anic verses of it provide reasoning and statements for the public, while, serving as a guide and admonition for the virtuous Muslims.

The Qur'an says:

"This is an explanation for mankind, and a guidance and an admonition for the pious ones."[27]

Hoping to receive the Divine success so that by reciting, reading, instructing, acquiring cognition of it, its understanding, and practice of this heavenly Book, we may follow the track and the course leading to our

happiness and virtue.

The Differences Between Healing and Mercy

We are aware of the fact that 'healing' is usually employed as against diseases, defects and deficiencies. Therefore, the first effect that the Qur'an can affect the souls of men is the cleansing of them from all kinds of mental and ethical illnesses of both the individuals and the society.

It is, therefore, from this point onward that the phase of 'favour' arrives which is characterized by the inculcation of Divine morality and the flourishing of human virtues which are embedded in those people who have received the Qur'anic education.

In other words, the Qur'anic term 'healing' is an allusion made to the 'purification', while 'favour' refers to 'reconstruction'. Or in philosophical and mystical terms, the former refers to the process of 'catharsis'[28], and the latter alludes to the process of 'beautification'[29].

Therefore, whatever emanates from the source of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, is a favour for the believers; and the Lord has required doing favors from His part[30], and He has appointed His Prophet to the world as a favour[31], while the Muslims proceed with doing favour to one another[32] and His Book also equals favour[33].

As the Qur'an comes from Allah's side, Who is the Creator of man and his nature, its laws are also corresponding to his nature, and are salvaging, and are the means of happiness and grace.

Why Is It that The Oppressors Get Negative Results?

Not only in this verse but also in other verses of the Qur'an we read that the enemies of the truth, instead of being enlightened whole-heartedly by the illumination of the verses, removing these dark spots, they usually add up to their ignorance and wretchedness.

This is due to the fact that the very essence of their existence has transformed into another form because of their paganism and their dissidence. Thus, wherever they behold the light of the truth they stand up against it. This opposition against the truth adds to their 'nasty' state, thus reinforcing their spirit of rebellion.

In other words, as the disbelievers actually do not observe and practice the 'commandments' and 'Prohibitions' of the Qur'an, the revelation of each decree adds up to their crime and offence, and, adds up to their disadvantages.

The verses of the Qur'an are like the proverb saying that they are like the raindrops, enlivening, which make tulips grow in gardens and make thorns grow in the wilderness.

The verse says:

“...and it adds not to the unjust except in loss.”

Anyway, the Qur’an equals cure and mercy for those who are suffering from the love of the world, dependence on material things, and unconditional surrender in face of the passions.

And again the Qur’an provides prescription for cure and mercy for the world in every corner of which the flames of war are burning, bowing under the burden of arms race, and which is throwing all its important capital and human resources at the feet of the monster of war and arms.

And, eventually, the Qur’an is a curing prescription for those whose path for Allah’s proximity has been obstructed because of their dark curtains of passions.

Traditions Concerning the Magnitude of the Qur’an

1. The blissful Prophet (S) has remarked:

“I have left two (important) things among you so as not to get astray when grabbing the two. One is the Qur’an, the other one is my family household.”[34]

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The Qur’an’s excellence over other words and speeches is like the Lord’s superiority over all creatures.”[35]

3. The Prophet of Allah (S) has said:

“The Qur’an is the best and excels every thing but the Lord. He who respects the Qur’an, has respected the Lord and he who does not honour the Qur’an, has committed acts of insolence towards the Lord.” [36]

4. Hadrat-Imam Rida (as) has quoted Imam-M�sa Kazim (as) who said:

“Someone asked Imam Sadiq (as):

‘How is it that the more the Qur’an has been read and publicized, the more its refreshing aspect is being added to?’

Imam Sadiq (as) answered:

‘It is because the Lord has not appointed it for a particular time and a certain people. Thus, it is ever fresh and new for every nation in every new epoch until the day of resurrection’.”[37]

5. The great Prophet of Islam (S) said:

“Keep always yourselves reminiscent of the Qur’an, for the Qur’an is a ‘useful cure’, a ‘blissful remedy’, and guards off him who appeals to it; and it salvages him who follows it.”[38]

6. The blissful Prophet (S) said:

“Those involved in the Qur’an’s matters excel the highest human position next to the prophets and the Divine envoys. Thus, do not overlook and downplay (them and) their rights, for they are valued greatly before Allah.” 39

7. The dear Prophet (S) said:

*“The best ones among you are those who learn and teach the Qur’an.”*40

8. Imam Sadiq (as): has remarked:

“The believer who reads the Qur’an and practices it in his youth, the Qur’an is mixed with his flesh and bones (and blood), and the Lord places him alongside the great envoys (the prophets and the Imams) and the benevolent people, and, the Qur’an acts as his advocating defendant in the doomsday.” 41

9. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“It is appropriate for a believer not to die before learning the Qur’an or being engaged in learning it.” 42

10. The blissful Prophet (S) said:

“Read the Qur’an and practice accordingly. Do not distance yourselves from it; do not exaggerate over it, do not earn a living by it; and, do not seek superiority through it.” 43

It is necessary to conclude this statement also that this prescription is only effective once one acts according to its content; otherwise, one must not expect any results. Therefore, the blissful Prophet (S) has said:

“He who reads the Qur’an and does not act accordingly, the Almighty will muster him blind and tormented on the day of resurrection.” 44

Surah Isra’ – Verses 83 - 84

وإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَي الإِنسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَأي بِجَانِبِهِ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ كَانَ يَئُوساً

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَي شَاكِلَتِهِ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَي سَبِيلاً

83. “And when We bestow favour on man, he turns away and (proudly) withdraws aside; and when any evil afflicts him, he is in despair.”

84. “Say: ‘Every one acts according to his own mould, but your Lord knows best as who is best

guided to the way.”

When We bestow Our blessings on man, he turns a blind eye to them as if it were not him who has prayed and appealed to Us, distancing himself from performing what is his due in face of Our blessings and is not grateful to Us , and he also turns away from the bounty of the Qur’an. Muj ahid says that it means: he alienates himself from Us, hence, he gets involved in arrogance and egotism.

The verse says:

“And when We bestow favour on man, he turns away and (proudly) withdraws aside...”

But, as soon as he is caught in the midst of poverty and sorrow, he loses his patience and becomes desperate, while, a believer is not so, for he is always in a state of hope and activity. Hence, the verse refers to those who are not believers though it appears to be general.

The reason as to why such diseases and calamities are called ‘evil’ is that these are regarded as evil from the viewpoint of a pagan, for a pagan does not expect any reward in exchange for them.

Moreover, the human nature detests them. Otherwise, such diseases and catastrophes are, in fact, expediencies, and appropriate in their own context. Thus, the Qur’an declares in the next verse that: O! Muhammad: Tell them: A believer and a pagan both act according to their own disposition and manner.

The believers who seek cures from the Qur’anic verses and attain blessings are on the opposite side of those oppressors who do not obtain anything from it except losses.

There are also some incapacious ones who are arrogant once they are affluent, but become desperate when they are in difficulties. They all act according to their own characteristics which have been formed in them as a result of their education and habitual training, thus directing man’s activities.

The verse says:

“...and when any evil afflicts him, he is in despair.”

“Say: ‘Every one acts according to his own mould...”

In the midst of all this, the Lord is observant of the state of everyone. Certainly, your Lord knows best those whose paths are better and from the point of guidance are more fruitful.

The verse says:

“...but your Lord knows best as who is best guided to the way.”

Let us turn to two concluding points:

The Qur’anic phrase /na’ abij anibihi/ signifies following one’s own egotistic desires who is self-centered

and turns his shoulder round.

The Arabic term /šakilihi/ means shaping and forming of one’s spiritual state which comes about as a result of one’s heredity, education and social culture.

1. Wasa’il, vol. 3, p. 115
2. According to the consensus of the scholars of two great sects of Islam mentioned in their books, the Qur’an ic phrase /Qur’an -ul-fajr/ signifies: ‘Morning Prayer’, some of their books are: Tafsir Rauh-ul-Ma‘ ani, by ’ Al�si Baqd adi, vol. 15, p. 136; Tafsir-ul-K ashif, vol. 5, p. 75; Tafsir-ul-Bahr-ul-Muhit, vol. 6, p. 68; Tafsir-Ibn-i-Kathir, vol. 3, p. 54; Tafsir-Jami‘-’Ahk am-ul-Qur’an , by Qirtabi, vol. 5, p. 309; Tafsir R�h-ul-Bayan, vol. 5, p. 191; Tafsir Majma‘-ul-Bayan, under the verse in question; etc. (Tafsir-i-N�r-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 115)
3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 238
4. Surah H�d, No. 11, verse 114
5. Tafsir-Ruh-ul-Ma’ ani, vol. 15, p. 126
6. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 87, pp. 142-148
7. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 87, p. 144
8. Bihar, vol. 87, p. 142
9. Bihar, vol. 87
10. Wasa’il-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 5, p. 268
11. Wasa’il-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 5, p. 269
12. Bihar, vol. 87, p. 140
13. Surah As-Sajdah, No. 32, verse 16
14. Bihar, vol. 87, p. 140
15. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, 21397.7
16. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, 21405.7
17. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 87, p. 161
18. Bihar, vol. 87, p. 161
19. Mizan-ul-Hikmah, vol. 5, p. 10467
20. Bihar, vol. 87, p. 156
21. Wasa’il-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 5, p. 281
22. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 87, p. 159
23. Al-Mizan, vol. 1, p. 178
24. Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 18
25. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vo. 3, pp. 212-213
26. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 176
27. Surah ‘Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 138
28. Catharsis signifies purification of one’s soul from the viscous attributes and hidden evils.
29. Replenishing of one’s inside with decent and spiritual attributes.
30. Surah Al-’An‘ am, No. 6, verse 12
31. Surah Al-’Anby a, No. 21, verse 107
32. Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 29
33. The verse under discussion
34. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar Wal-’Athar, Kitab-ul-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 94
35. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar Wal-’Athar, Kitab-ul-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 182
36. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar
37. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar Wal-’Athar, Kitab-ul-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 169
38. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar, vol. 1, p. 432
39. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 1, p. 180

40. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 2, p. 286
41. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, vol. 92, p. 187
42. Bihar, vol. 92, p. 189
43. Nahj-ul-Fisahah, p. 80
44. Jami‘-ul-’Akhbar, vol. 1, p. 409

Section 10: Qur’an Inimitable

Surah Isra’ – Verse 85

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً

85. “And they ask you about the spirit, say: ‘The spirit is of the command of my Lord, and you are not given of the knowledge but a little’.”

The Arabic term /rūh/ (spirit) has been mentioned 21 times in the Qur’an and used in certain cases. Anyway, man’s spirit is a complicated matter, unknown and a Divine blow which has got celestial dimensions, and only Allah knows it.

Imam Baqir (as) has commented upon the Arabic term /qalil/ in the sense of ‘few individuals’. That is, full knowledge has been only provided for only a select group of people and these are they who are exclusively aware of the soul.

Anyway, in this noble verse, pursuing previous verses, the Qur’an deals with some of the important questions of the pagans, or of the people of the Book, saying:

“And they ask you about the spirit, say: ‘The spirit is of the command of my Lord, and you are not given of the knowledge but a little’.”

Great commentators have been incessantly speaking about the commentaries of this verse, and we shall first deal with the meaning of ‘soul’, then its various forms of usage in the Qur’an and, afterwards, we shall deal with the comments of the verse and quotations in this regard.

1. The Arabic term /rūh/ (spirit), philologically signifies ‘breath’ and ‘running’. Some declare that this word and the Arabic term /rih/, meaning ‘wind’, are both derived from the same root.

If we find /rūh/ the spirit, which is an abstract and independent ‘gem’ called this way, it is because, from the viewpoint of mobility and creative form as well as its invisibility, it is like breath and wind. So much is for the meaning the word.

2. There are various usages for it in the Qur'an: At times, it refers to 'the Holy Spirit' who has assisted the prophets in their missions like, verse 253 of Surah Al-Baqarah, which says:

"And We made Jesus, son of Mary, clear Signs, and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit..."

At other times, it refers to the Divine spiritual power which reinforces and invigorates the believers, like verse 22 of Surah Al-Mujadalah, No. 58, which says:

"...these are they into whose hearts He has impressed the faith, and whom He has confirmed with a spirit from Himself..."

Occasionally, it has been named as the 'exclusive angel of revelation' and has been characterized as 'Amin' (truthful) as in the verses 193-194 of Surah Ash-Shu'ara', No. 26, saying:

"The Faithful spirit has descended with it,"

"Upon your heart that you may be of the warners,"

At other times, it has been applied as one of the great angels of the 'exclusive Divine angels' or 'a creature superior to the angels', as in verse 4 of Surah Al-Qadr, No. 97, which says:

"The angels and the Spirit descend in it by the permission of their Lord for every affair."

We also read in verse 38 of Surah An-Naba', No. 78:

"The Day (on which) the Spirit and the angels shall stood arrayed..."

On the day of the resurrection, the spirits and the angels stand up alongside one another forming one queue.

On other occasions, it has been regarded as the Qur'an or the Divine revelation like in verse 52 of Surah Ash-Shur a, that says:

"And thus did we reveal to you; an inspired Book by our command..."

And, finally, we find its venue used as human spirit, as we read in verses concerning the creation of man, saying:

"Then He fashioned him in due proportion and breathed into him of His spirit."[1]

And He also reiterates:

"So when I have completed him and I have breathed into him of My Spirit, fall you down, prostrating yourselves unto him."[2]

3. The issue in question now is what is meant by 'the spirit' in the verse under discussion? Which spirit is it that a group of curious people have inquired about it and the Prophet (S) answered in response to them implying that the issue of spirit is among those which solely concern my Lord and you know but little about it.

Out of the totality of the existing references in the verse, as well as out of it, one can infer that those investigating ones were inquiring about the gist of the truth about human soul; this very splendid spirit which differentiates us from animals, and which is our utmost superior quality that causes our nobility, whence all our power and activities originate from, by the aid of which we turn the skies and the earth into our spheres of influence.

With its assistance, we tend to split the secrets of the sciences, delving into the core of the existence of all beings.

They sought to know what is this prodigy of the world of creation. And, as the soul is different in its structure with the matter which is subject to the principles governing the matter and its physical and chemical attributes, the Prophet (S) is commissioned to utter this concise and meaningful sentence:

"The spirit is of the command of my Lord."

that is, its creation process is complicated and mysterious.

Then, to stop them being stunned, the verse continues saying:

"And they ask you about the spirit, say: 'The spirit is of the command of my Lord, and you are not given of the knowledge but a little'."

Thus, it is not at all surprising that you do not acquire the mysteries embodied in 'spirit', though they might be more intimate to you than all other things.

In the commentary of 'Ayyashi, there are quotations from Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) who commenting on /yas'alūnaka 'an-ir-rūh/ said:

"One of Allah's creatures is 'Spirit' that has got senses of vision, power, and force as well. The Lord locates the spirit in the hearts of the prophets and of the believers"[3].

In another quotation, one of the two great Imams has been quoted as saying:

"Spirit is of invisible world and emanates from Allah."[4]

In numerous quotations from the Shiite and Sunni sources, we have it that the Quraysh pagans, getting this question from the savants of the People of the Book, wanted to put the Prophet (S) to the test thereby.

They were told that in case Muhammad provided them with a great deal of information in this connection, this would be the reason for his dishonesty. Hence, the Prophet's (S) concise and meaningful statement was surprising and miraculous for them.

However, in quotations received through Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) regarding the commentary of the above verse, we note that 'spirit' has been considered as a created being introduced as superior to Gabriel and Michael, who has always remained with the Prophet (S) and the Imams, and who has kept them all, in their godly line, from every kind of deviation.

These quotations not only are not incompatible with the comments which we made about the verse, but they are also consistent with them in their entirety, since man's spirit has got a specific hierarchy.

That phase of the spirit which is found in prophets and in Imams, is surely an extraordinarily elevated stage, one of the consequences of which, is its infallibility and state of 'flawlessness' from deviations and sin as well as its full cognition state and its extraordinary state of knowledge. It is certain that such a phase of spirit excels all angelic stages, including those of Gabriel and Michael.

The Authenticity and Independence of the Spirit

The issue of the spirit and its structural forms along with its mysterious specifications has always been the focus of attention of the scientists since the recorded human history was begun, and every scientist has tried his share to delve and explore, as far as he can the mysterious environment of the spirit.

It is just for this very reason that the views expressed by men of knowledge are so widespread and various. Probably, our present knowledge, and even the knowledge of the future generations, for the recognition of the entire secrets of the mysterious nature of soul prove to be insufficient, though our spirit is in closer contact with us than anything else in this world.

However, we must not be caught by surprise, when we are incapable to understand the depth of this miracle of creation which is beyond matter, for the basic substance of the soul varies tremendously with whatever we have ever been associated with and got used to in this world.

This state of the spirit must not hinder us to explore its landscape by our sharp insight of our intellect, becoming aware of its underlying general principles and orders which are governing it.

The most important principle which must be recognized here is the issue of authenticity and independence of 'spirit' as against opposition raised by the materialistic schools which regard the spirit as something of material, considering it to be of the properties of the brain matter and the nerve cells, beyond which they believe in nothing to exist.

Our focus of discussion in here centers about this very issue, for all discussion of the 'survival of the spirit' and the issue of absolute abstraction or 'purgatory abstraction' relies heavily on it.

Before entering this discussion, however, we must point out to the fact that the interdependence of the spirit on the body as some have believed, is not a kind of interdependence like that of the introduction or, for instance, of the blowing of the wind into a bag pipe.

Contrarily, it is some kind of relationship and interdependence based on the administration and control of the spirit over the body and its domination and governance, that some have resembled it to the interdependence of 'meaning' to the utterance.

Certainly, this issue will best be clearly explained in the discussion of 'the independence of the soul'. Now, we shall turn to our principal discourse.

There is no doubt as to the fact that man is different from stone and wood which are lacking in spirit, for, we well feel different with respect to the inanimate objects, even with plants. We understand, imagine, decide, determine, love, hate, etc.

However, plants and stones lack in all these aspects in this form. Thus, there is an original difference between them, and us which is that of possessing human soul. Neither the materialists nor any other factions deny or reject the principle of the existence of the 'soul' or 'spirit', and, it is for this reason that all consider psychology and psychoanalysis as a positive science.

Although both of these two sciences are in their infancy, they are those branches of knowledge which are pursued by professors and researchers at great world universities. As we shall see 'the soul' and the 'spirit' are not, in fact, separate from each other; but they are different phases of the same reality.

As far as the issue involved is that of the relationship of the spirit with the body and their mutual interdependence, we call it the 'soul', and, while, spiritual phenomena are being discussed away from the body, we tend to call it the 'spirit'.

Briefly speaking, no one rejects the fact that there exists an entity which is called the 'spirit' and the 'soul' within us.

It now remains to be seen that the all–encompassing conflicts between the materialists, on the one hand, and the metaphysicians and spiritualists, on the other hand, are being waged in which domain?

The answer is that the theologians and the philosophers who are metaphysician believe that in addition to the substances which form the body of man, there is another entity or gem hidden in him which is not made of the matter, though man's body is under its direct impact.

In other words, the spirit is a metaphysical entity, the structural form and activity of which is other than the structure and activity of the material world. It is true that it is constantly in contact with the material world, but it is not 'matter' or properly of matter.

On the opposite side, the materialist philosophers are aligned who say: We do not know of any

independent being different from matter under the name of the spirit or under any other name; whatever exists is this material body or its physical or chemical effects.

We possess a system called the brain or nerve system which does an important part of our essential activities for us and which perform their functions like other bodily systems, acting under material laws.

Certainly, scientists reject this line of reasoning which is propounded by the material philosophers, declaring it is null and void. For further information, refer to Tafsir-Nem▯nah, vol. 12, under the same verse.

To conclude this statement, the word /r▯h/ (spirit) has been repeated 21 times in the Qur'an, and the reality of the 'spirit' is beyond the understanding of man's knowledge which lies as one of the Divine secrets. Man's knowledge, with respect to it, is limited and very minimal.

Surah Isra' – Verses 86 - 87

وَلَئِن شِئْنَا لَنَذْهَبَنَّ بِالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ لاَ تَجِدُ لَكَ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا وَكِيلاً

إِلاَّ رَحْمَةً مِن رَّبِّـكَ إِنَّ فَضْلَهُ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ كَبِيراً

86. "And if We please, We would certainly take away whatever We have revealed unto you; then you would find no one thereover to defend you against Us,"
87. "Save the mercy from your Lord, verily His favour to you is great."

Whatever you possess emanates from His Grace. The issue in question concerned the Holy Qur'an itself in several of the previous verses. He once again takes up the discussion on this subject.

At first, He says:

"And if We please, We would certainly take away whatever We have revealed unto you; then you would find no one thereover to defend you against Us,"

So, it is We Who has bestowed these sciences upon you so as to enable you to be the leader of the people and it is We Who will take back whatever We deem expedient, and there will be no interference allowed by anyone in this respect.

Therefore, this noble verse takes up a threatening attitude towards the holy Prophet (S) declaring that the Lord takes back those merits if He wishes in much the same way that he has bestowed.

The subsequent verse has got a soft and encouraging tone. In other words, the Qur'an, the revelations, prophetic mission, being the seal of Prophets, and intercession all are among Allah's favors towards the

holy Prophet (S), and they all originate from the position of Allah's Lordship, and He will not take back all He has bestowed on him, though He is capable with firm power, and He can perfectly do that.

The holy verse says:

"Save the mercy from your Lord..."

However, as Allah is great with utmost superiority, His favor is also just as great, and His immense kindness is peculiar to the Prophet (S).

Thus the verse continues to say:

"...verily His favour to you is great."

Allah's great kindness is immense with regard to you, for He has selected you as His prophet, and granted the Qur'an to you so as to open up new gateways of knowledge facing you, and to make you aware of the secrets of human guidance, and, finally, to protect you from all errors, enabling you to serve as an example for all the people till the end of the world.

Surah Isra' – Verse 88

قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَي أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْءَانِ لاَ يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيراً

88. "Say: 'If (the whole) mankind and the Jinn were to gather together to bring the like of this Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it though some of them be helpers of others'."

The Arabic term /zahir/ is derived from /zahr/ meaning 'backing up' and 'advocate'.

The verse is an answer to the pagans who used to say: We, too, can bring the like of the Qur'an if we want to.

This call of the Qur'an for challenging, and bringing an example like that, has remained unanswered for centuries and, up till now, the Arabic-speaking enemies from among the people of the Book as well as the atheistic schools, have been unable to bring the like of the Qur'an despite their hostility towards Islam and despite the support which they have enjoyed from the various sources of power.

Anyway, here the Almighty, addressing the Prophet (S), announces:

"Say: 'If (the whole) mankind and the Jinn were to gather together to bring the like of this Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it though some of them be helpers of others'."

This verse explicitly challenges all the beings of the world, including the small and the great, Arabs and non-Arabs, human beings as well as even intelligent non-human beings, scientists, philosophers,

literary figures, historians, the genius and the non-genius, briefly speaking, all without exceptions throughout the centuries to face the challenge of producing the like of the holy Qur'an, proclaiming:

If you think that the Qur'an is not the word of the Lord and it is man's own fabrication, you are also a man and you can fabricate one like that. And, whenever you felt unable, after struggling hard, while combining your efforts, this provides you with the best reason for the miraculous nature of the Qur'an.

This call for challenging with the Qur'an, which is in the vocabulary of the scholars, expert in theology, known as /tahaddi/, (challenge) is one of the pillars of every miracle and wherever such a meaning is in force concerning a subject, we find transparency as to the miraculous nature of that issue in question.

Incidentally, the unique specifications of the Holy Qur'an consist of being both miraculous while, at the same time, it is eloquent and varying; it foretells the future while containing the best of stories; it provides the best method of calling while it is expressive of all problems, whether social and individual needs, worldly and after-life requirements in all fields and at all times.

Surah Isra' – Verse 89

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَى أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلاَّ كُفُوراً

89. "And We have explainer for the people, in this Qur'an, every (kind of) similitude, but incline not most of the people save denying."

By means of the verses of the Qur'an, Allah has completed the argument to people. This verse, in fact, is the statement of one of the aspects of miracle and the inimitability of the Holy Qur'an, i.e. its comprehensiveness.

It implies that, in this noble Qur'an, Allah has displayed unto the people examples of everything so that all sorts of knowledge are gathered in it; yet most of the people refused to do anything but denying.

The verse says:

"And We have explainer for the people, in this Qur'an, every (kind of) similitude, but incline not most of the people save denying."

Verily, this variety of the contents of the Qur'an, and emerging from an illiterate person in particular, is amazing. This heavenly Book contains both the firm rational reasoning together with its special elaborateness in the field of creeds, and the statement of the ever-sure ordinances based on the necessities of people in any grounds.

The Qur'anic discussions upon historical subjects are unique in their kind. They are exciting, awakening,

interesting, shaking, and free from any kinds of superstition. Its ethical matters affect on the prepared hearts in the same manner that the rain of the spring does upon the dead lands.

The scientific points which are propounded in the Qur’an have made manifest some facts which, at least in that time, were not known to any scientist.

Precisely speaking, whatever fields the Qur’an arrives, it offers the best. That is why if the Jinn and humankind come to help each other in order to bring the like of it, they will not be able to do so.

Surah Isra’ – Verses 90 – 91

وَقَالُوا لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّي تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الاَرْضِ يَنْبُوعاً

أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِن نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّـرَ الاَنْهَارَ خِلاَلَهَا تَفْجِيراً

90. “And they said: “We shall never believe in you till you make a spring to gush forth from the earth for us,”
91. “Or till you should have a garden of date-palms and grapes in the midst of which you cause streams to flow forth,”

The Arabic term /yanb?‘/ refers to a fountain which will never dry up and which will always gush.

The pagans, who rejected the miraculous nature of the Qur’an, made their embracing the belief conditional upon attainment of some material gains, asking the holy Prophet (S) for some undue expectations.

They neglected the fact that the prophets would perform miracles so as to justify their prophetic mission. This is done not for meeting the whimsical demands of the obstinate people or for the sake of their entertainment or escaping from effort and endeavour.

In fact, undue expectation, callousness, obstinacy, seeking pretexts, unawareness of the aims, and rudeness, all intermingled with one another so as to put illogical requests to the Prophet (S), like a fountain, gardens, rivers, collapse and fall of the skies, summoning of the Lord and of the angels, golden houses, flight into skies, and a private letter from the Lord.

Anyway, the pagans of Mecca stated:

We do not confirm your prophetic mission unless you split the ground of Mecca which is scarce in water resources and make a fountain emerge out of it, which gashes.

The verse says:

“And they said: “We shall never believe in you till you make a spring to gush forth from the earth for us,”

Or they demanded from him a garden which had got plenty of date-palms and grape trees, covered by them, amidst which streams flow so as to water trees beneath them, little knowing that the goal of the prophets had been people’s guidance and leading them to monotheism, though some groups thought of gardens, gold and silver while such requests and expectations were not logical.

The verse says:

“Or till you should have a garden of date-palms and grapes in the midst of which you cause streams to flow forth,”

Surah Isra’ – Verses 92 – 93

أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمآءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفاً أَوْ تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلآئِكَةِ قَبِيلاً

أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِن زُخْرُفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَى فِي السَّمآءِ وَلَن نُّؤْمِنَ لِرُقِيِّكَ حَتَّي تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَاباً نَّقْرَؤُهُ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي هَلْ كُنتُ إِلاَّ بَشَراً رَسُولاً

92. “Or you cause the heaven, as you think, to fall in pieces upon us, or bring Allah and the angels face to face with us,”

93. “Or there be for you a house of gold, or you should be flying in to the sky, and never will we believe in your ascending unless you bring down to us a book which we may read. Say: ‘Glory be to my Lord! Am I aught but a mortal messenger?’”

Miracles are among the exclusive characters of the Divinity of the Lord and have their origin in the Divine will and Wisdom. From among the conditions of miracles is that they must not be aimless, useless and utterly improbable.

The demands of the pagan from the Prophet (S) are worthless. Making the skies collapse will exterminate all and every thing, leaving no one alive to become a believer. Summoning of the Lord and the angels is also an utter impossibility, for they are not ‘bodies’ which can be summoned for us so as we witness them with our eyes.

Therefore, in this verse, the obstinate pagans reiterated that you thought you were a prophet and you possessed miracles, therefore, turn the sky into pieces, shredding everything and making them fall over us. Or you bring forth[5] the Lord and the angels before[6] us so as we can see them with our own eyes and witness that you are authentic and legitimate, your call being valid.

The verse says:

"Or you cause the heaven, as you think, to fall in pieces upon us, or bring Allah and the angels face to face with us,"

In the subsequent verse, the Qur'an says:

"Or there be for you a house of gold…"

Or you ascend to the sky. Even if we witness with our own eyes, doing that, we are not to believe, unless you fetch us each a book from Allah testifying to your prophetic mission, which we shall read.

The verse continues saying:

"…or you should be flying in to the sky, and never will we believe in your ascending unless you bring down to us a book which we may read…"[7]

We read at the end of these verses that Allah commands His prophet, culminating these contradictory and paradoxical proposals, to say to them that He is clean and pure of all these imaginary conjectures; that is, He is distant from performing miracles according to your wishes.

Thus, the holy Prophet (S), addressing them, said: I am also like other prophets. I am a human being. Those prophets used to perform miracles for their nations which were actualized by Allah.

This is not a matter of concern to me and up to me to do what I wish. It is up to Him alone, Who is aware of what is expedient. Thus, there is no reason as to why you demand such things from me.

The verse continues saying:

"…Say: 'Glory be to my Lord! Am I aught but a mortal messenger?'"

1. Surah As-Sajdah, No. 32, verse 9
2. Surah Al-Hijr, No, 15, verse 29
3. Tafsir Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 216
4. Ibid, p. 215
5. The Arabic phrase /kama za'amtum/ is an allusion made to the threats and the pledges of chastisement which the Prophet (S) states in Surah Saba', verse 9.
6. The Qur'an ic term /qabil/ refers to what is placed before man and what he is confronted with.
7. The Arabic term /zukhruf/ denotes originally some kind of ornament, like gold which is one of the precious metals, and is used as ornament. This term is also applied for houses with paintings and decorations.

Section 11: No Cause for Anyone to Disbelieve Any Messenger of Allah

Surah Isra' – Verse 94

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَآءَهُمُ الْهُدَي إِلاَّ أَن قَالُوا أَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَراً رَسُولاً

94. "And nothing prevented the people from believing when the guidance came to them except that they said: 'Has Allah raised up a mortal as Messenger?'"

The only reason as to why the pagans were kept away from embracing the belief in the Qur'an and the command of the Prophet (S), was the fact that they could not accept the prophetic mission of a man from the side of Allah.

The noble verse says:

"And nothing prevented the people from believing when the guidance came to them except that they said: 'Has Allah raised up a mortal as Messenger?'"

Therefore, the pagan people did not submit themselves to the reasons for obvious miracles, for they would say as to how could the Lord appoint a man for prophecy? The Lord's envoy must be raised from among the divine angels.

This groundless paradox hindered them from believing in the holy Prophet (S). As was about the worship of the unitary essence of Allah, in which case, they proclaimed that:

"Our worship of Allah is not worthy of Him."

Hence, they succumbed to the worship of the idols, and to their thinking, by this act they tried to glorify the Lord, while this act is not an act of glorification to Him. On the contrary, it is being heedless of the pure essence of Allah, the Glorified.

Certainly, those who do not possess a sound reasoning and rationale, regard a strong point as a weak one. The fact that the Prophet (S) was a human being is a strong point in him and not a weak one, for having instincts and motives as well as difficulties will cause him to grasp best the sufferings of men, and can provide a practical paradigm as well as a useful prescription.

Surah Isra’ – Verse 95

قُل لَوْ كَانَ فِي الأَرْضِ مَلآئِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنّيِنَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِم مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَلَكاً رَسُولاً

95. “Say: ‘Had there been in the earth angels walking at peace, We would certainly have sent down an angel from heaven to them as messenger’.”

This noble verse refuses the attitude of those who raised objections to the fact that the Prophet (S) was selected from among the human beings, and implies that: The sending of the prophet is Allah’s way of treatment and a religious necessity.

Even if all the inhabitants of the earth were angels, and there were no quarrels and rows among them, and all of them were in perfect health and enjoying welfare, there would be some envoy from their progeny and gender coming from the side of Allah, for the mission of the prophets consists of enduing perfection and spiritual development as well as the provision of paradigms, and not merely the removal of hostilities from among them.

The Qur’an says:

“Say: ‘Had there been in the earth angels walking at peace, We would certainly have sent down an angel from heaven to them as messenger’.”

Incidentally the homogeneousness of the leaders with that of the people is a necessity for their education and their imitation of their identification figures. Mankind for mankind, and angels for angels can serve as best paradigms.

The reason for such a homogeneity of the leader and of the followers is clear, for, on the one hand, the most important part of the propaganda section of a leader is his practical side, that is, serving as a paradigm and an identification figure which is only made possible when the leader possesses the human instincts and feelings and the same bodily structural forms and spiritual ones.

On the other hand, a leader must understand well all the pains and sufferings, needs and demands of his followers so that he can produce remedies for them and respond to them. It is for this reason that the prophets have risen up, and emerged from among the bulk of the people, while the accession to the position of the prophet is from the side of the Lord and it is not an elective office.

Surah Isra’ – Verses 96 – 97

قُلْ كَفَي بِاللَّهِ شَهِيداً بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيراً بَصِيراً

وَمَن يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِهِ وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَي وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمْياً وَبُكْماً وَصُمّاً مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيراً

96. "Say: 'Allah suffices as a witness between me and you; verily He, of his servants, is All-Aware, All-Seeing."

97. "And whomever Allah guides, then he is guided aright, and whomever He leaves to stray, you will never find for him guardians other than Him; and We shall muster them on the Day of Resurrection upon their faces, blind, dumb and deaf whose dwelling shall be Hell; whenever it abates, We shall increase for them the blaze."

Pursuing the previous discussions, which centered around monotheism and prophetic mission as well as discourses with the opponents, here, in this verse, there is a sort of declaration of the termination of the current discussion, at this stage, and providing conclusion.

At first the Qur'an implies that if they do not accept your reasoning concerning monotheism, prophecy and resurrection, proclaim upon them, saying: It suffices for me that the Lord is an intermediary and a witness between you and I, for, He is aware of the feelings of His servants and He is All-seeing unto their works.

The verse says:

"Say: 'Allah suffices as a witness between me and you; verily He, of his servants, is All-Aware, All-Seeing."

In fact, there are two objectives in view in making this statement. The first one relates to the fact that the obstinate, and fanatic opponents receive a threat that the Lord is aware and All-seeing while He is witnessing all our deeds and all your acts. Do not imagine that you can escape His sphere of power or part of your acts remains hidden from Him.

The other objective is that the Prophet (S) should exhibit decisively his firm conviction as to what he has stated, for the speaker's decisiveness in his speech leaves a great impact on the listener.

Maybe, this expression, which is firm and decisive coupled with a sort of mild threat, leaves its impact on them, shaking them in their hearts, and awakening them, calling them to the right path.

Afterwards, the Qur'an adds:

"And whomever Allah guides, then he is guided aright, and whomever He leaves to stray, you will never find for him guardians other than Him..."

The only way they have is to return to Him once again and seek the light of guidance from Him.

These two sentences, in fact, are allusions to the fact that the mere pounding reasoning is not sufficient for embracing the faith. On the contrary, before gaining the Divine success and proper eligibility of Allah's guidance, it is impossible for him to embrace the faith.

A Persian poem indicates:

It is the clean sperm necessary to become worthy of receiving favour; Otherwise every pebble or piece of clay will never turn into shining stones or pearls.

Then, the Qur'an illustrates for them one of the scenes of the resurrection day as a challenging and pounding threat, which is the certain consequences of their actions, proclaiming that:

"...and We shall muster them on the Day of Resurrection upon their faces..."

Instead of them walking in an upright and erect standing position, the angels of punishment draw them on their faces, or they will be crawling over their faces and chests like reptiles. They will be entering into that great court in a state of blindness, deafness, and dumbness.

The holy verse continues saying:

"...blind, dumb and deaf..."

There are different stages and stop phases for the day of resurrection, in some of which the sinners are blind, deaf, and dumb, though in other platforms they regain their eyesight, their sense of hearing, and their tongues open up so as to enable them to witness scenes of punishment, listen to the blaming of others, and cry for help, expressing their weakness, which itself is one way for punishing them.

The culprits also are deprived from seeing what is the source of delight, and from hearing what is joyful, and from saying whatever is directed towards salvation; on the contrary, they only see, hear, and say what is a source of discomfort.

In the end of the verse, the Holy Qur'an implies that their eternal abode is Hell, but you must not imagine that its Fire will eventually be extinguished, like the worldly fire. Nay!

"Whenever it is about to fade away, We shall rekindle new flames to it."[1]

The verse says:

"...whose dwelling shall be Hell; whenever it abates, We shall increase for them the blaze."

Surah Isra' – Verse 98

ذَلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالُوا أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَاماً وَرُفَاتاً أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقاً جَدِيداً

98. "That is their recompense, for they disbelieved in Our signs and said: 'What! When we become (mere) bones and decayed dust, shall we, then, indeed be raised, into a new creation?'"

The Arabic term /ruf at/ refers to straw particles which are so shredded into pieces which cannot be broken further.

In the previous verses we noted as to how an evil fate awaits in the world hereafter for the sinners; a destiny which makes every sane person to think and contemplate. Here, the Qur'an explains the reason of this matter in a different way.

It says:

"That is their recompense, for they disbelieved in Our signs and Said: 'What! When we become (mere) bones and decayed dust, shall we, then, indeed be raised, into a new creation?'"

Certainly, the disbelievers have got no reasons for rejecting the resurrection, and whatever they utter is said as mockery and ridicule or is because of their astonishment, or considering as impossible.

Surah Isra' – Verse 99

أَوَلَم يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّماوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ قَادِرٌ عَلَي أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجَلاً لاَّ رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَأَبَي الظَّالِمُونَ إِلاَّ كُفُوراً

99. "Have they not consider that Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth is able to create the like of them? And He has appointed for them a term in which there is no doubt; but the unjust refuse aught save disbelieve."

The Holy Qur'an has repeatedly sought to remove all doubts concerning resurrection by pointing out to the creation of the heavens and the earth as well as to the enormity of the system of creation along with the Divine domination over the creation process. The Holy Qur'an implies whether the process of your creation is harder or the creation of the heavens which He has undertaken.

The verse says:

"Have they not consider that Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth is able to create the like of them?..."

That is, the best reason for establishing the possibility of something which is there, is its very existence and its very accidence.

In the doomsday, the decayed bones are the same worldly bones and the spirit to which it has joined is that same spirit. However, the Qur'an states /milahum/ (like those), it is just like the 'raw bricks' which,

when pounded, it is possible to manufacture once again bricks of the same proportion and quality.

In this case, people say: These bricks are like the former ones, and not identical with them, or they say that the materials which have gone into them are the same.2

The best rationale to prove the resurrection is focusing our attention on the Divine power in nature.

Therefore, He remarks in this noble verse asking: Do those who regard resurrection as impossible, not know that Allah, Who has had the ability to create the heavens and the earth, can create like of them in the doomsday, for the creation of them is not harder than the creation of the heavens and the earth.

As the Qur'an says:

"Are you the harder to create or the creation of the heaven He made it?"3

The Lord designated for them a decisive destiny that the goal of which is death or the resurrection. However, these oppressors abstained from accepting the truth, and they added up to their rejections though the evidences were quite clear for them.

The verse says:

"...And He has appointed for them a term in which there is no doubt; but the unjust refuse aught save disbelieve."

Surah Isra' – Verse 100

قُل لَوْ أَنتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَآئِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي إِذاً لاَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الإِنفَاقِ وَكَانَ الإِنسَانُ قَتُوراً

100. "Say: 'If you possessed the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, then you would definitely withhold (***them***) ***for fear of spending, and man is ever niggardly."***

The Arabic term /qat□r/ is derived from the word /qitr/, meaning: miserliness and avarice or withholding from sharing with others of one's wealth.

As they insisted on the idea that the prophet must not be of the same genus as mankind, apparently some kind of jealousy and avarice stopped them from believing that, perhaps, Allah has bestowed this blessing on a human being.

Thus, He says in this verse:

"Say: 'If you possessed the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, then you would definitely withhold (***them***) ***for fear of spending, and man is ever niggardly."***

These last three verses are the most obvious of the verses which provide justifications for the resurrection of the body, for the pagans astonishment concerned as to how the Lord can return to life once again those decayed bones which have turned into dust.

The Qur'an's answer also covers this very point, implying: That Lord Who created the heaven and the earth, has also the potentiality to assemble all scattered human particles and to provide them with life.

Incidentally, one of the reasons stressed by the Holy Qur'an repeatedly for establishing the issue of resurrection, is the its taking recourse to the generalization of the Lord's Omnipotence.

1. The Arabic term /xabat/ refers to the flame which is fading, and the word /sa'ir/ means 'to flame the fire', and it is one of the names of Hell.
2. Tafsir N�r-uth-Thaqalayn
3. An-Nazi'at, No. 79, verse 27

Section 12: Those Gifted with Knowledge – The Ministry of Moses

Surah Isra' – Verses 101 - 102

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى تِسْعَ ءَايَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتِ فَسْأَلْ بَنِي إِسْرآئِيلَ إِذْ جَآءَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي لأَظُنُّكَ يَا مُوسَى مَسْحُوراً

قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَآ أَنزَلَ هؤُلآءِ إِلاَّ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ بَصَآئِرَ وإِنِّي لأَظُنُّكَ يَا فِرْعَوْنُ مَثْبُوراً

101. "And indeed We give Moses nine clear signs, so ask the Children of Israel when he came to them, and, Pharaoh said to him: 'O' M�sa! Verily I think you are bewitched'."
102. "He said: 'Indeed you know that none has sent these (miracles) down save the Lord of the heavens and the earth (as) clear proofs, and I think you lost, O' Pharaoh!'"

In several of the foregoing verses, we noted as to what peculiar demands the pagans used to put to the Prophet (S). We, here, find Him, in fact, exposing one of the examples of such scenes in preceding generations as to how they witnessed extraordinary events and miracles and they, yet, looked for pretexts, rejecting everything.

At first, He says:

“And indeed We give Moses nine clear signs...”

These divine signs consist of: The stick, the white hand, the storm, locusts, one kind of plant-pest called /qummal/, the over-increase in the number of frogs, blood, drought, and deficiencies.

Later, in order to stress this point further, He adds in implication to Moses that if your opponents even reject this matter outright, in order to deliver an ultimatum to them, tell them to ask the sons of Israel as to how they were when these verses came down to them.

Notwithstanding these, not only they did not subject themselves to the acceptance of the fact, but also they accused Moses of being a sorcerer, and of being crazy.

The verse continues saying:

“...so ask the Children of Israel when he came to them, and, Pharaoh said to him: ‘O’ M�sa! Verily I think you are bewitched’.”

This is the case with all the arrogant people who used to accuse the godly men of sorcery or insanity for their innovations and their movement against the treatment of corrupt communities and their exhibition of extraordinary behaviour, so as to be able to influence naive people, scattering them from around the prophets.

Thus verse 102 shows Moses (as) did not keep quiet in face of all this under accusation, affirming categorically, where it declares:

“He said: ‘Indeed you know that none has sent these** (**miracles**) **down save the Lord of the heavens and the earth** (**as**) **clear proofs, and I think you lost, O’ Pharaoh!’”

Therefore, O pharaoh!, you reject the facts while having full knowledge of the facts and while you are cognizant of them. I believe you, Pharaoh, will eventually perish.

Two Points in Conclusion

The first point: In the Glorious Qur’an, there are numerous verses and miracles mentioned concerning Moses, among which one might refer to the following:

1. Conversion of the stick into a giant snake and the act of swallowing of the tools of the sorcerers.[1]

2. The white hand or the shining of the hands of M�sa (as) like a source of light.[2]

3. The pounding storms.[3]

4. ‘Locusts’ which dominated their farms and their trees, and served as a nuisance for their flourishing agriculture. [4]

5. One plant-pest agent which exterminates cereals, called /qummal/[5]

6. The frogs which emerged from the Nile River and reproduced to such an extent that they made people's lives miserable and full of difficulties.[6]

7. 'Nose-bleeding' or 'blood' which signifies the universal counteraction of nose bleeding or the turning of the Nile into the colour of the blood which made the river water neither good for drinking nor fit for agriculture. [7]

8. The splitting of the sea in such a way that the Children of Israel could pass through it.[8]

9. The descending of /mann/ and /salwa/ which was explained under verse 57, of Surah Al-Baqarah.

10. The gushing of the springs from stone.[9]

11. The splitting away of part of the mountain and its placement as a canopy over them.[10]

12) Famine and draught as well as shortage of fruits.[11]

13. Returning to life of a murdered individual whose death instigated intensive opposition among the Children of Israel.[12]

14. Use of the cloud shadows as canopy which protected them in a miraculous way in intense desert heat. [13]

The issue in question in here is: What is the objective of 'the nine verses', which have been alluded to in the verses under discussion?

The expressions utilized in these verses reveal the fact that they signify miracles which were mentioned in connection with Pharaoh and the adherents of Pharaoh, and not the ones which were involved with the Children of Israel themselves, like the descending of 'Mann and Salwa', and the emergence of the spring from a stone, and the like.

Considering this point, one can claim that the five topics which are dealt with in verse 133 of Surah Al-'A'raf, are among these nine signs: Storm, plant-pest, locusts, over reproduction of frogs, and blood.

Undoubtedly, the two famous miracles of Mūsa (as), that is, the issue of the 'stick', and the 'white hand' are among the nine signs, specially, it is noteworthy that we find verses 10 to 12 of Surah An-Nahl the same expression of the 'nine signs', which are mentioned after the statement of these two great miracles.

These all make up the seven supernatural or 'extraordinary events'. Now, let us turn to the other two verses. Undoubtedly, the drowning of the people of Pharaoh, and the like, cannot be included among these signs, for the goal of explaining of the signs is to guide the people of the Pharaoh and not those

which caused their destruction and extermination.

Concentrating on Surah Al–'A'raf, in which we find many of these verses, exhibits the fact that the objective in mind of the other two signs have been the 'draught' and 'the shortage of all kinds of fruits', for after the miracle of the stick and the 'white hand' and before the mentioning of the five signs of the storm and the locust, the holy verse says:

"And certainly We afflicted the clan of Pharaoh with drought and scarcity of fruits, so that they may take admonition."[14]

The second point: who is the one questioning the Prophet (S)?

Apparently, the verses show that the Prophet (S) was commissioned to investigate from the Children of Israel about the nine signs which were revealed to Moses (as), asking them about how the people of the Pharaoh rejected the authenticity of the call of Moses (as) despite all those clear signs under so many different pretexts.

But, as such a person like the Prophet (S) did not require putting to them such a query despite all his knowledge and wisdom; some commentators have still regarded other addressees as the agents who have put the question to them.

However, taking into consideration that the question raised was not the one put by the Prophet (S) for himself, rather, it was put for the acceptance by the pagans, it does not matter that the investigator be the Prophet (S) himself so that the pagans should know that if the Prophet (S) did not accept to give in the various proposals of the pagans, it was because such proposals did not have any motives for the sake of seeking the truth.

On the contrary, their attitude was based on obstinacy, fanaticism and hostility, and their story was like the one we read about in the story of Moses (as) and Pharaoh.

Surah Isra' – Verses 103 - 104

فَأَرَادَ أَن يَسْتَفِزَّهُم مِنَ الاَرْضِ فَأَغْرَقْناهُ وَمَن مَعَهُ جَمِيعاً

وَقُلْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ اسْكُنُوا الاَرْضَ فإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ الاَخِرَةِ جِئْنَا بِكُمْ لَفِيفاً

103. "So he (Pharaoh) decided to scare them from that land; but We drowned him and those with him, all together."

104. "And, after that, We said to the Children of Israel: 'Settle in the land and when the promise of

the Hereafter comes to pass, We shall bring you** (**all**) **assemble together."

The Arabic term /'istifz az/ signifies 'expelling by force'. The Qur'an has repeatedly made allusions to these methods of oppression towards the men of Allah and their eventual frustration. They put 'Ibrahim within fire, the Lord turned the fire cold.

They threw Yusuf down the well, the Lord elevated him to the rank of 'Aziz in Egypt. They expelled the Prophet (S) from Mecca, Allah bestowed on him the government of the entire world of Islam. Such is the Divine way of treatment and the rule of Allah, Who has got suitable contrivance against the dirty tricks of the evildoers.

Therefore, the Qur'an implies in this verse that since the Pharaoh was not able to resist against the pounding reasoning and rationales of Mūsa, he took recourse to the same tricks employed by all oppressors who are illogical throughout the ages, as the verse says:

"So he** (**Pharaoh**) **decided to scare them from that land; but We drowned him and those with him, all together."

And, thus, He implies: We told the Children of Israel, to settle down in the lands of Egypt, Damascus and Bayt-ul-Muqaddas.

However, when the time of after-life arrives, We shall make you assemble, appearing in the Court of Justice altogether.

The verse says:

"And, after that, We said to the Children of Israel: 'Settle in the land and when the promise of the Hereafter comes to pass, We shall bring you** (**all**) **assemble together."

The Arabic term /lafif/ means interrelated large groups.

What Land is the Objective of /'ard/ In These Verses?

We read in the previous verses that the Lord told the Children of Israel that now that you have conquered the enemy, you must settle down in the 'promised land'. Does this signify the land of Egypt?

(This same word, which has been stated in the previous verse that says Pharaoh wanted to expel them from that land, is mentioned in this sense with the same meaning; other verses of the Qur'an also affirm the fact that the Children of Israel became the heirs and the inheritors of them)

Or else, this is an allusion made to the 'Holy Land' of Palestine, for the Children of Israel went to the land of Palestine after this event and were commissioned to enter it.

However, we do not consider it as a remote possibility that both lands have been the objective of it, for

the Children of Israel became both the inheritors of the lands of the Pharaohs, as testified by the Qur'an, and they became the proprietors of the land of Palestine.

In the meantime, does the Qur'anic phrase /wa'd–ul–' axirah/ signify the Hereafter? The answer to this question is apparently positive, for the sentence:

"…We shall bring you** (**all**) **assemble together"

provides us with the corresponding meaning. Some commentators have also voiced another possibility.

Surah Isra' – Verse 105

وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلاَّ مُبَشِّراً وَنَذِيراً

105. "And, with the truth have We sent it** (**the Qur'an**) **down and with the truth it has come down; and We have not sent you except as a Bearer of glad tidings and as a warner."

The authenticity of the Qur'an has been guaranteed from distortions. The Qur'an has been verily revealed in truth, and the Divine revelation has also been received its destination safely, while, at the same time, the Satans have been unable to do it any harm.

Therefore, once again, the Qur'an calls on the grandeur and glory of this heavenly Book, providing answers to the objections and pretexts of the dissidents.

At first, it says:

"And, with the truth have We sent it** (**the Qur'an**) **down…"

At times, one may start doing something, but, because he is limited in his power, he may not be able to finish it up to the end.

However, one who has knowledge of everything, and is capable to fulfill everything he does while he is correctly positioned and ends everything in the right fashion, thus actualizing it to the fullest. For instance, man might sometimes let water out of a spring while it is pure though it might reach the consumption point quite impure for he is unable to preserve it through.

However, he who has command of his job quite well in all respects, he can fill everyone's jar who is thirsty with pure water.

The Qur'an is just such a Book which has been descended with the truth from the Lord, and He has guarded and protected it in its courses from any point of view, whether be it the stage that Gabriel was the means of revelation and where the recipient has been the Prophet (S) and has been preserved quite

well in such a way that the passage of time has even not caused any distortions in it, and will never be distorted, for the Lord has undertaken Himself its preservation.

Thus, this source of 'pure water' of the Divine revelation, will remain untouched through to the end of the world.

The verse continues saying:

"...and with the truth it has come down..."

Concluding His statement, He says:

"...and We have not sent you except as a Bearer of glad tidings and as a warner."

And you have got no right to introduce any changes in the context of the Qur'an.

Surah Isra' – Verse 106

وَقُرْءَاناً فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَي النَّاسِ عَلَي مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلاً

106. "And (it is) Qur'an which We have divided (in sections) so that you may read it to the people at a slow pace and We have sent it down gradually in portions."

One of the objections of the pagans related to the fact as to why the Qur'an has not been revealed as a whole in one part, when they said:

"...why has not the Qur'an been revealed to him all at once?..."[15]

The verse under discussion is in response to their objection.

As the verses of the Qur'an relate to different events, and they are meant to meet the requirements of all classes of the people throughout history, they are revealed in sections so as to correspond to the various events, thus becoming more pleasant for the audience.

Would that ever be possible to collect all the events of 23 years in one single day so that the problems raised therein be revealed in the Qur'an instantly?

The verses says:

"And (it is) Qur'an which We have divided (in sections) so that you may read it to the people at a slow pace and We have sent it down gradually in portions."

Incidentally, the gradual revelation implies the continuous relationship of the holy Prophet (S) with the

source of revelation. However, instant revelation would not guarantee such a relationship more than once.

Moreover, an instructor and a reformer must have a long term program in mind and must not be unaware of the new needs.

Thus, the Holy Qur’an does not contain only instructive aspects but it also possesses some practical aspects as well, which must be gradually implemented, and such an implementation of hundreds of commandments in a society which has got hundreds of sorts of corruption, at once, is an impossibility.

Surah Isra’ – Verses 107 - 109

قُلْ ءَامِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لاَ تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِن قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَي عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلاَذْقَانِ سُجَّداً

وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَآ إِن كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولاً

وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلاَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعاً

107. “Say: ‘Believe in it or believe not, (it makes no difference to Allah), verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is read to them, they fall down prostrate on their faces, adoring.”

108. “And they say: “Glory be to our Lord! Verily, our Lord’s promise is to be fulfilled.”

109. “And they fall down (in prostration) weeping and it adds up to their humility.”

In this noble verse, and in the following one, the Lord has commanded His prophet to remain rather heedless of such people who are companions of paganism and ‘Ignorance’.

Whether they embrace the faith or they reject it altogether it does not matter, for a better stock which includes those who are knowledgeable and who have studied the heavenly Books, and have practiced according to the Divine religions, have asserted their belief, confirming that he is the prophet who has been promised to emerge in their authentic religious books, and whenever the Lord’s verses are read to them, they fall to the ground, prostrating in face of all the Lord’s glory and for implementing what is promised in their Divine Books that He appoints Muhammad (S) as His Prophet and sends down the Book to him.

The verse says:

“Say: ‘Believe in it or believe not, (***it makes no difference to Allah***)***, verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is read to them, they fall down prostrate on their faces, adoring.”***

This is what is intended by the promise mentioned in the verse which says:

“And they say: “Glory be to our Lord! Verily, our Lord’s promise is to be fulfilled.”

By this, they mean: Our Lord’s promise is to be fulfilled. They express this way their utmost commitment and faith towards the Divinity of the Lord and His pure Attributes as well as to the promises He has kept.

This is a speech within which, both, faith in monotheism as well as the attributes of the Lord and His justice are included while the prophecy of the Prophet (S) and belief in resurrection are contained. Thus, they assemble all the religious principles in one concise sentence.

Again in verse 109, to stress further the point, and the impact of those Divine verses as well as of this loving prostration, the Qur’an implies that they fall into a state of prostration (involuntarily) and start crying, and the reading of these verses always adds up to their modesty.

They never stay in one state or mood, rather they try to climb up toward the peak of development, and continuously their modesty increases. ‘Modesty’, is the state of humbleness and the physical and spiritual politeness, in which case one bows to the command of Allah and His obedience.

The verse says:

“And they fall down (***in prostration***) ***weeping and it adds up to their humility.”***

Incidentally, the Qur’anic term / yaxirr□na/ is derived from /xarir/ in the sense of the whispering of the sound of water which is flowing downward from up. This also refers to those who, losing their control, fall into a state of prostration before Allah, worship Him in their fairly loud voices.

The Arabic term /’a□q an/ is the plural form of /□aqan/ which means ‘chin’, it signifies having absolute modesty, in which case, not only one’s forehead but his face and chin also touch the floor as well.

In conclusion, another clear lesson drawn from the above verses relates to the interrelationship of science with Faith.

The Qur’an implies whether you accept these Divine verses or not, men of knowledge will not only accept them believing in them but they also tend to fall into a state of prostration for the love of Allah which is like a burning desire within them, letting their tears be shed in abundance from their eyes.

Their modesty and humbleness is then being augmented while, at the same time, their polite behaviour and their respect increases unto these verses.

It is only those ignorant mean individuals who sometimes disregard heedlessly, and at times ridicule,

when confronting the facts: and even if such individuals happen to be attracted to the faith, their belief would be weak, fleeting, and void of love, activity and of any warmth.

Moreover, this meaning reflects a further emphasis on the obliteration of the empty hypothesis of those who believe that religion has got a correlation with the ignorance of mankind.

The glorious Qur'an, in contradiction with this claim, repeatedly stresses the fact that science and religion are always associated with each other in various circumstances. A deep and sustaining devotion in faith can only be attained in having a deep knowledge, and knowledge borrows its weight in higher echelons from faith. 'Remember'

Surah Isra' – Verse 110

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَانَ أَيّاً مَا تَدْعُواْ فَلَهُ الاَسْمآءُ الْحُسْنَي وَلاَ تَجْهَرْ بِصَلاَتِكَ وَلاَ تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلاً

110. "Say: 'Call upon Allah, or call upon the Beneficent; whichever you call upon; then the best names belong to Him; and do not utter your prayer too aloud nor be silent with regard to it, and seek a way between that'."

In some of the commentaries, we have it that once the holy Prophet (S) was praying in Masjid–ul–Haram, and was saying:

"O' Allah! O' Rahman!"

Some people thought he was calling two Gods one of whom was 'Allah' and the other one was (Rahman' (Compassionate). The verse was revealed and wiped out that paradox.16

In other words, the pagans and the polytheists used to ask as to why the prophet called the Lord by various names while he was claiming to be monotheist.

The Qur'an, answering them, says:

"Say: 'Call upon Allah, or call upon the Beneficent; whichever you call upon..."

Whichever you choose, it makes no difference; He has got to have various good names:

"...then the best names belong to Him..."

Those blindfolded individuals, at times, call a person or a place by different names, each of which presents one part or a portion of its existence.

Is it, therefore, surprising that the Lord, whose Essence is infinite in every respect and Who is the source

of all perfections, bounties, and goodness, be called by one specific name for whatever He does with respect to that job and whatever virtue His Holy Essence Possesses?

At the end of the holy verse, calling the attention to the discussion of the pagans in Mecca who used to ask with regard to the prayers of the Prophet (S) as to why he used to recite his prayers with a loud voice, disturbing them, He commands the Prophet (S):

"...and do not utter your prayer too aloud nor be silent with regard to it, and seek between, that'."

The noble verse implies: Neither recite it with a loud voice, shouting it; nor in a state of whispering it, in which case your lips might be moving and no voice heard.

Incidentally, we have it in the Shi'ah and Sunni quotations that; The Lord has got 99 names, and whoever calls Him by one of them, will succeed and will be saved. [17]

However, we must know that when speaking of numerating of these names, it does not mean that we utter them so as to enter the Paradise or become the one whose prayers are accepted.

On the contrary, they are intended for us to be inculcated with the values attached to them and implementing of those values relating to the names such as: Wise, Compassionate, Merciful, Generous, and Blissful in ourselves so as to make us both worthy of the Paradise and make our prayers acceptable in all cases.

Surah Isra' – Verse 111

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَداً وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الذُّلِّ وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيراً

111. "And say: '(All) Praise is Allah's, Who has not taken unto Him a son; nor has He got any partner in the Sovereignty; and there is not for Him any helper out of humbleness.' And magnify Him with all magnificence."

We finally arrive at the last verse of this Surah, the verse which ends with the praise of Allah just as it started with the praising of His pure existence. In fact, this holy verse is a conclusion, culminating all of the monotheistic issues of this Surah and the content of all those monotheistic concepts.

Addressing the Prophet (S), He says:

"And say: '(All) Praise is Allah's, Who has not taken unto Him a son; nor has He got any partner in the Sovereignty; and there is not for Him any helper out of humbleness.'..."

Such a Lord, with those attributes, stands far too superior to whatever you conjecture. Thus, glorify Him and get to know His immensely boundless magnitude.

The verse concludes:

"...And magnify Him with all magnificence."

The above verse negates all assistance and generic like being for Allah whether be it of a lower grade (like a son) or some counterpart for Him, (like a partner), or that one who stands as superior, (like a guardian).

The Late Tabarsi quotes from some commentators (in Majma'-ul-Bayan) that this verse provides the refutation of the belief of three groups:

First, that of the Christians and the Jews who regarded Allah as having a son; the secondly that of the Arab pagans who regarded Him as having a partner; thirdly, that of those star-worshippers and the Zoroastrians who regarded Allah as having a guardian and an assistant.

In Conclusion: What is 'Takbir', or Glorification of Allah?

Here, the blissful Qur'an commands the Prophet (S) emphatically to glorify Allah. This does not merely imply that one must believe in the glory of the Lord just by saying the words 'Allah is the greatest'.

This point is also worth considering that the belief in the glory of the Lord does not imply that we regard Him as greater when comparing Him to other beings. Such a comparison is by far irrelevant in principle and by definition.

We must regard Him as greater than in comparative terms, as Imam Sadiq (as) has said in a concise and meaningful speech. An Islamic tradition declares: Someone called on that Imam, saying:

'Allah is the greatest!'

The Imam asked him:

"Of what is He greater or the greatest?

He answered:

"Of all things."

The Imam (as) explained:

"You confined Allah by saying that, as you made a comparison between Him and other beings, then considering Him as superior."

That man asked:

"Then, what must I say?"

He answered:

“Say: Allah is far too superior to what one can characterize.”[18]

A Persian poet declares:

O’ You Who are superior to all imaginations, comparisons, conjectures, and hallucinations:

And also excelling in whatever we have seen, written, or heard.

Our audience came to an end and our life is over, nevertheless, we are stuck in the first phases of our attempt at our depicting of your profile.

Incidentally, some quotations from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) indicates that the reading of this verse has been considered as effective in removing of one’s dues, removing of passing whims and passions, discarding of poverty, and expelling of diseases.[19]

O’ Lord! Replenish our heart and soul with the illumination of the lights of knowledge and faith so that we can remain humble before Your grandeur, staying faithful to Your promises and obeying fully Your commands, worshipping no one but You and relying on no one except on You.

O’ Lord! Bestow upon us the means of success not to violate the frontiers of justice and moderation, avoiding all sorts of extremism.

O’ Lord! We thank You; consider You as One; glorify You beyond what can be explicable. You, too, provide us with forgiveness, make our determination ever stronger and help us prevail over the enemies who have surrounded us from interior and from exterior.

Help us to join our victories to those ultimate victories of the uprising of the promised Mahdi (as), and provide us with the means for completing this commentary as it would be pleasing to You.

Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and bestow on us from Your mercy, for You are, indeed, the Ever-Bestower. [20]

1. TaHa, 20
2. TaHa, 22
3. Al-’A‘raf, 133
4. Al-’A‘raf, 133
5. Al-’A‘raf, 133
6. Al-’A‘raf, 133
7. Al-’A‘raf, 133
8. Al-’A‘raf, 133
9. Al-Baqarah, verse 60
10. Al-’A‘raf, 171
11. Al-’A‘raf, 130
12. Al-Baqarah, 73

13. Al-Baqarah, 57
14. Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 130
15. Surah Al-Furqan, No. 25, verse 32
16. Tafsir-Tibyan and Forqan
17. Tafsir-i-Tabari, Al-Mizan, and Majma‘-ul-Bayan
18. Tafsir-Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn vol. 3, p. 239
19. Tafsir Borhan
20. ‘Al-i-‘Imran, verse 8

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